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The Message of the East

JANUARY 1912

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held at the

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by SWAMI PARAMANANDA

of India

SUBJECTS FOR JANUARY 1912

January 7th. India and Her Contribution to the Thought World.

" 14th. Reincarnation.

" 21st. The path of Wisdom.

" 28th. True Meaning of Yoga.

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Wednesday, 3-5 p m. Swami Paramananda will see those who desire to talk with him personally. At other times by appointment.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I JANUARY, 1912 No. 1

In the name of the Supreme Being of the Universe we send out this "Message of the East" with the hope and prayer that it may bring a clearer understanding between East and West and that its spirit may so touch our hearts as to awaken therein Divine harmony and peace. Uncharitableness, fanaticism and denunciation do not belong to the spiritual realm or, indeed, to true civilization; hence we should strive diligently to transcend them. God grant that we may be so genuine and earnest in our spiritual pursuits that we shall always welcome the message of the Truth with whole-heartedness, free from bias and prejudice, no matter whence that message comes. Truth is truth whether it comes from the East or the West. May we with the sword of wisdom, therefore, cut down all the fictitious barriers that divide race from race, country from country, creed from creed, and find beneath them the underlying bond of unity. Then we shall realize that we are members of one universal family, worshipping the same Supreme Being, and that, as the sages declared in the Rig Veda: "Truth is one, though men call it by various names."

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Different creeds are but different paths by which to reach God. Many are the roads to the Temple of Divine Mother at Kalighat. Similarly, various are the ways to the House of the Lord. Every religion is such a path leading to the one Supreme Being.

As one and the same substance, water, is called by different names by different peoples—*eau, aqua, wasser, pani,* etc., so the one *Satchidanandam* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss-Absolute) is invoked by some as God, by others as Allah, by still others as Jehovah, or Divine Mother or *Brahman.*

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

"The basis of all religions is the same, wherever they are; try to help them all you can, teach them all you can, but do not injure them."

—*Instruction given to Buddhist missionaries.*

If what philosophers say of the kindred between God and man be true, what has anyone to do, but, like Socrates, when he is asked what countryman he is, never to say that he is citizen of Athens or of Corinth, but of the world?...Why may not he who understands the administration of the world, and has learned that the greatest and most principal and comprehensive of all things is this system composed of men and God; and that from Him the seeds of being are descended, not only to my father and grandfather, but to all things that are produced and born on earth; and especially to rational natures, as they alone are qualified to partake of communion with the Deity, being connected with Him by understanding: why may not such a one call himself a citizen of the world? Why not a Son of God? —*Epictetus.*

He who sees himself in all beings and all beings in his own Self, how can there be any more doubt, suffering or imperfection for him, since he perceives oneness everywhere?

Isa-Upanishad.

The favor of the climate, making subsistence easy and encouraging an outdoor life, allows to the Eastern nations a highly intellectual organization,—leaving out of view, at present, the genius of the Hindus (more Oriental in every sense), whom no people has surpassed in the grandeur of their ethical statement.

—*Emerson.*

The influence (of Indian thought) would be as momentous in Europe, when it became well known, as the revival of the Greek and Latin culture after the Dark ages.

—*Schopenhauer.*

What we may reasonably expect is not the coming of a new religion from the East to supersede Christianity, but the coming of influences from the East to renew and restore Christianity. Our lamps burn low, but we need not cast them away; we should simply open them to the sacred oil from the East, which the High Priest of the Temple is even now pouring in upon the wicks—when, lo! a new flame in which we shall see and rejoice.

The qualities which the Western world lacks the Eastern world holds in excess. We might then look for the ordering by Providence of an infusion of the essence of the East; the balm of Gilead for the wounds of England, the cordial of India for the tire of America.

—*Rev. R. Heber Newton.*

MIND AND MAYA

Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Mind is one and not more than one. But when that mind is divided into many parts, each part becomes weak. If, however, the dissipated mind is brought together again, then the whole mind regains its power. You know that if an ordinary mathematical problem is placed before two students, the less concentrated mind will need more time to solve it. The weaker the mind the longer the man will have to think, or in other words the longer the mind will have to doubt. So long as there is a doubt in your mind, so long you will have to think. A thinking mind is always a doubting mind. For instance, you see a rope and mistake it for a snake; then you look and think it may be a rope, but a wind makes it move and again you think it may be a snake; and so you go on reasoning and thinking until you ascertain what it really is and all doubt leaves your mind. Then you cease to think about it.

Doubt is a disease of the mind; and just as the body is restless under disease, so the mind is restless under doubt. This very restlessness of the mind shows that doubt is not a natural condition. The natural condition of the mind is where all doubt is solved, where no doubt remains, and that is the mind of the Lord. God does not have to think. He has no doubt, everything is solved for Him; so His mind is never restless. Now if the mind is restless, it is because it is in an unnatural condition. Restlessness always indicates an abnormal condition; hence doubt, which brings restlessness, must be unnatural. Suppose a mother loses her baby, is she at rest? No; so long as she does not know where her child is, she is running here and there and cannot remain quiet.

But if someone comes and lays the baby in her arms, at once all unrest and doubt leave her and she is at peace.

Where is your mind? You cannot tell me where it is. It is so scattered that you cannot bring it back. But if you can bring it home, as the mother her lost baby, you will be at peace. This concentration, or bringing the lost mind home, is the way to find peace. How has this mind been lost? It has been waylaid by *Maya*. Just as a man comes and kidnaps a child by offering it sweetmeats, so you all have been kidnapped by this wicked *Maya*. It tries to lure you away. And for what? It wants to make a human sacrifice of you. You desire life and it holds death for you. It promises you happiness, but instead, it puts a load of misery on you. It tells you: "You must study this physical universe, you must know about science, you must conquer the forces of nature." This is how this siren of *Maya* deceives this little baby of the mind; and you say: "Yes, yes, knowledge is power. I must know something about these forces of the universe so that I can make them give me what I want."

Man tries, therefore, to gain all the knowledge he can about the universe. With what result? To try to know about the universe is like trying to touch the horizon. You may go round and round the earth, but you will never be able to touch the horizon; and it is equally foolish to try to know all about the universe for you can never make the infinite finite. There are some who say that this universe is finite, that in infinite space is this little finite universe. But then one asks: What is the use of this infinite space? Why is so much space wasted? There must be something in it; and it will never be possible for finite man to know

all that fills infinite space.

Thus under the influence of this siren *Maya* man is constantly misled. Everyone wants to be happy, wants to be all-knowing and wants to live forever. From this we can make out that man is *Sat-chit-anandam,* or eternally wise and blissful. But he has lost his all-blissful nature, and although he is struggling to regain it, he is taking a false course. He is trying to find it in the world. Thus *Maya* has stolen man's mind away and hidden it in the meshes of creation.

Maya is mysterious in her nature. She is bad and she makes you think she is good. She is your greatest enemy and she makes you think she is your only friend. She is really very terrible to look at, for she is death; but she appears very handsome to you. Now the question comes: How can we save ourselves from this siren? There is one method—that of discrimination. When a man reflects: "The world is not a home for me. I may get married and think I have a home here; but some day a child dies and that reminds me that I do not belong here. When I have thus made out the untruthful nature of *Maya,* I must keep that truth before me. I must develop my discriminative faculty. I must analyse the world before me, and then I shall find out that nowhere —neither in the worlds above, which go by the name of *Swarga* (heavens), or here in this world, shall I find happiness. For in none of these is life eternal and nowhere short of eternal life shall I find happiness." In this way a man becomes steady in his wisdom.

When he reaches that state, man looks upon this whole world as a prison-house. So it can-

not be a home. Home carries with it the idea of permanency. Home carries with it the idea of comfort, for you are nowhere so comfortable as in your home. Home also carries with it the idea of freedom. Outside of your home you are not free. But in his own home even a slave is free. Thus home carries with it these three ideas,—permanency, comfort and freedom. This world therefore cannot be home, for none of these are to be found here. Yet because the home here has a little bit of permanency, you love it; for you love permanency so much that even where there is a smell of permanency, you love that. So it is with freedom and comfort.

When man finds out, therefore, that the world can never give him a home which will be permanent, or which will bring him comfort and freedom, he begins to look elsewhere. For how many homes here give these? Even where there is an ideal home, it still does not satisfy our hunger, for we have an unlimited hunger for bliss, for eternal life and for freedom; and in any home here these can be had only in a limited quantity. Hence this world can never give us our ideal home, a home where we can have infinite happiness, infinite comfort and infinite liberty. Go to any king or emperor and see if he has these. You will find that no person is satisfied with what he has. When a man discovers this, then he says: "If I cannot find such a home here, I must search elsewhere." And when he reaches this state he becomes steadfast in his spiritual life.

This is one method of learning how to concentrate the mind. When you know that the pleasures here and the pleasures in the higher worlds are not such as to satisfy your hankering,

when you know that all is impermanent here and that there all is *Nityam* (eternal), then your mind will have a tendency to go there. Man knows then that all this cannot bring him happiness and he says: "I must not make friends with this world." Thus he grows disgusted with this siren of *Maya*, for he has weighed the whole universe in the balance and has found it worthless. But when he wants to come away from it, he finds it very difficult. Once an opium-eater went to a doctor in Calcutta and said: "Doctor, this opium is undermining my constitution and I know it will kill me, yet when I try to give it up, I cannot." The physician replied: "Do not try to stop it. Go on taking it just the same; but when you weigh out the quantity for the day, use a piece of chalk in the other scale, and each time before you use it, make a mark with the chalk on the floor." The man did this and at the end of six months he found the chalk one-half its original size and the amount of opium also diminished by half. At the end of a year the chalk was gone and he had broken himself of the habit of opium-eating.

In the same way the man who would give up the world learns that he must do it gradually. He finds out that the mind has become perverse on account of the bad habit it has contracted and he must destroy this habit little by little with the aid of *Shama* and *Dama* (control of body, mind and senses). Next he discovers that although he wants to make his body do this or that, it has become weak through indulgence; and so he must begin to practise *Titiksha* (fortitude). Then he sees that although he wants to concentrate his mind he cannot do it, so he strives to be dead to every attraction and charm. Thus he gets rid of this siren

of *Maya*. But as he goes on, he says: "Yes, I am dead to the world, no doubt, but now where shall I go? And who is there to point out to me the way?" When he is in this predicament, the Guru (spiritual teacher) comes forward. At this moment he must have *Shraddha* (faith in the Scriptures and in the teacher.) The next stage is *Samadhana* (one-pointed devotion to the Ideal) which brings the final victory over this siren *Maya*. In this he realizes that towards which, not only every man, but every animalcule is struggling,—eternal freedom. To do this, however, we must struggle hard. We shall have to give up all that tied us to the world. And we can only do this when we have something to take the place of what we give up. Very few people have that faith in the Scriptures or faith in the Guru which will enable them to give up; for very few know that this is not their home. Every man has naturally a love for his own country and his own home. The moment he is with his wife, children, sisters and mother, he does not want to leave them. He labors all the day just to please them. This is the real state of affairs with everyone, and since this is the case, then we shall understand why there is to be found in the world scarcely one searcher after truth.

It is very easy to repeat these facts, "This is not my home," etc. It is very easy to deliver a lecture on the subject, as I am doing; but to say: "This is not my home, this is not my mother, this is not my father," and believe it, is very difficult. Who is really searching after this real home? Yet who does not want the things to be found in that real home,—happiness, freedom, eternal life? It is only because we cannot get these that we are satisfied with the little things

here. But if we could get these we would take them very gladly. Yet if it is a fact that there is such a home, we must seek it. If there is an eternal Father, an eternal Mother, we must find them. Prahlada knew that he had such a Father and such a Mother and so he was able to withstand all the persecutions of his earthly father.

If we discriminate properly, we shall have to arrive at this conclusion: "Yes, I love a true home, I am naturally a lover of such a home; but that home cannot be found here. If I am eternal I must have an eternal home, with an eternal Father and Mother." This path of discrimination very few will be able to follow. Among millions perhaps one will try to go to his true home. For this reason Sri Krishna says: "Among thousands some one striveth for perfection, and among thousands of those who strive, some one may attain." And again he tells us: "Your only duty should be to come to Me. This method of self-help is very dangerous." What then does He advise? Since this path of discrimination can be taken by very few, what is the most practicable path which everyone can take? He says: "None can escape this siren of *Maya*, which has come out of Me, save by taking refuge at my feet. You must go to a teacher and follow him with humility and obedience and serve him with a lowly spirit. Those people who take refuge at my feet, even though they are naturally sinful, will become righteous souls and attain peace. Whoever becomes my devotee is sure to be saved."

So, my dear friends, if everyone of you wants to be perfectly happy, if everyone of you wants to escape death, you will first have to get rid of this world. This world is a terrible siren. How can you give it up? Simply by loving God. You

need not give up anything; merely love God with your whole heart. Do all for Him. Every man works at something, no one can remain inactive; do all your work for Him. "Whatever you eat, whatever you give to others, whatever austerities you perform, do it all for Me. Never do for yourself, do all for Me. Never live for yourself, live for Me."

In this way, if you live for God, and if this ideal is ever before your eyes, that lost thread will be found. Then you will be able to find your true home, your true father, your true mother. Then when anyone asks you who is your father, you will say: "My father is God." At present you take that as the answer of a madman. But now and then there comes a man who knows that his father is God—as Christ and Prahlada did.

When you thus unite yourself with God, if you know how to love Him, He with His infinite grace will know how to love you infinitely more. When you rise to the height that you are able to recognize God as your father, all distinctions of caste and creed will drop away from you. Therefore our great Master Sri Krishna has taught us: "They should be regarded as wise who can regard a humble and learned Brahmana, a cow, an elephant, a dog and a chandala as one and the same (seeing the same Self in all). For God is infinite, so His love must be infinite and it must go out to all equally."

Blessed is the man who has faith in such a God! In this twentieth century very few men believe in the existence of a God. They believe in their own existence, in the existence of their wife and children; but few believe in the existence of a God. Blessed, therefore, is he who believes in God and who believes that all else is unreal.

The ordinary man believes in the reality of this world only, but the true believer thinks that God alone is real and that this world is only a great mirage. "What is day to the seer, is night to the ordinary man; and that in which the worldly man wakes, is night to the wise." The conclusions of the man of the world are never the conclusions of the wise man.

Therefore your duty should be never to forget your true home and your true Companion. Never neglect that Companion; for all these are only your companions for a few days. Blessed will that day be for you when you will look upon God as your one companion and your true home.

May that blessed day come to everyone of you! This is my heart's prayer.

He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that taketh not his cross and followeth after me is not worthy of me.

He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

—*Matthew, X, 37-39.*

PURITY OF MIND

Extract by Swami Paramananda

Mind is the cause of the bondage and the liberation of all human beings. This mind is of two kinds,—pure and impure. It is pure when it does not run after earthly things. With such a mind we can meditate on our Ideal and become free. But when the mind is attached to the sense-plane or filled with selfish desires, then it is impure and

causes all our bondage. So we must struggle to train it in such a way that we can make it pure and thus attain mastery over the senses and sense-desires.

Everything is conquered by the strength of a pure and unselfish character. When you have purity and unselfishness, nothing more is necessary to bring wisdom. There is naught else in this universe which can give more quickly peace and light to the soul than purity of body and thought; as also there is nothing more potent than impurity to bring the gloom of unhappiness over the soul. This has always been the same. It is the inevitable law. Truth is one and unchangeable. It needs boldness to realize it, worship it and stand by it. Know this and be irresistible in the spirit of truth and purity. Death is not death when we can die by serving our Ideal. Purity, loyalty, perseverance, fearlessness are the necessary things to enable us to worship the Lord truly.

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

It may not be generally known that the Vedanta Movement in the West constitutes a part of an active and important reform movement in the East, begun and carried on by the Order of Ramakrishna, or "The Ramakrishna Mission," as it is known in India—an Order founded in the last century by the great Religious Teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, later organized and developed by his eminent disciple, Swami Vivekananda, and now under the direction of Swami Brahmananda, the president of the Mission. The Vedanta Centre in Boston and other such centres in America and Europe are branches of this Order, which has its headquarters in a monastery on the Ganges near

Calcutta, with institutions of most varied character all over India, for preaching and teaching are not the only features of its work. At Benares, Kankhal and Vrindavana there are free hospitals for the care of the poor and helpless, hundreds of outdoor patients and aged men and women being nursed and fed daily in their own homes, besides the usual indoor cases, the number treated in one year at the three institutions amounting to fully twenty thousand. At Murshidabad in Bengal, there is an orphanage, which is also an industrial school. And at Mayavati in the Himalayas, 7500 feet above the sea level, there is an Ashrama or Peace Retreat, where there is an extensive publishing work carried on, including a monthly periodical, "Awakened India," one of several publications issued by the Order.

The Monastery at Madras stands as the head of the Mission's work in Southern India. Here Swami Ramakrishnananda (who has recently passed away), through many years of tireless labor and devotion, spread over the whole of South India a network of schools, reading-rooms, societies and other philanthropic or educational institutions directly or indirectly affiliated with the Order. In Madras there are several girls' schools and a students' home for boys, who assist in the service and work of the Monastery. At Bangalore, there is an important monastery, built wholly through Swami Ramakrishnananda's efforts; at Vanyamvadi there is a Vivekananda Hall for public meetings, as well as schools for poor boys and girls; at Jaffna in Ceylon there is a girls' school, at Colombo a Vivekananda Society, etc.

Apart from these organized institutions, the Order carries on extensive relief work wherever there is a famine, flood, earthquake or fire. When

any such calamity overtakes a district, at once a band of workers is sent to the place of distress, while another band sets out to collect by begging the needed funds or food. During the famine in Orissa a few years ago, the members of the Order fed daily 30 villages with the food collected by other members, who from day to day begged from door to door the necessary provisions and funds.

It is our purpose to publish in subsequent numbers more detailed accounts of these various branches of the work.

* * *

Swami Paramananda, the head of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, returned to Boston on Dec. 22nd, after a six months' absence, spent chiefly in India. On his journey out, he stopped for a few weeks in Europe, passing some interesting days in Switzerland as well as with a group of earnest friends of Vedanta in Germany. He was also asked to deliver a lecture at Stratford-on-Avon during the Shakespearean festival held there in August. Mr. F. R. Benson, the famous Shakespearean scholar and actor, presided; a number of thoughtful and representative people were present; and the Swami's explanation of "The Fundamental Principles of Indian Thought" was listened to with so much sympathy and interest that the Vicar, rising to thank the speaker at the close, requested the audience not to mar by thoughtless questions the effect of the Swami's words, but to carry home unspoiled the impression they had left. A London weekly, in recording the event, writes: "As he (the Swami) spoke, one seemed to be drawn closer to the spirit of the East, which is so much more native to us than the hot-headed philosophies of the West."

After reaching India, the Swami spent some time in rest and retirement at Puri and Calcutta with the President and other members of the Order of Ramakrishna, to which he belongs. At Madras he gave a number of lectures before different institutions; in East Bengal he was accorded a most enthusiastic welcome; and before boarding the ship for the return journey, he delivered a final lecture at Colombo.

* * *

The Swami conducted the Christmas Service at the Vedanta Centre in Boston on Dec. 24th; and on the following Tuesday the students gave a reception in honor of his return. After greeting all who came, the Swami gave a short but most impressive talk on the Vedanta work in Boston. He called attention to the fact that it was just now entering upon its fourth year and he expressed great satisfaction at the steady growth of the Centre, not so much in numbers as in the sincerity and deepening spiritual understanding of its members. Many had taken up the religious life and were applying the teaching with true earnestness. This, the Swami emphasized, constituted the real source of strength in the Centre. Financial aid, he said, was secondary. Those who brought a pure unselfish heart, humility and sincere devotion gave the real support to the work and assured its success. He added that he was very glad to be able to announce the establishment of a "Sisters' Home" and the starting of the present monthly publication.

After serving some *prasad* (blessed fruits and sweetmeats) the Swami closed the evening by showing with a projectorscope a number of pictures of Indian Temples and other views of India and Ceylon.

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" 11th. Tranquillity of Body and Mind.

" 18th. Religion of Work.

" 25th. Practice of Meditation.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I FEBRUARY, 1912 No. 2

Experience is the only source of knowledge. In the world religion is the only science where there is no surety, because it is not taught as a science of experience. This should not be. There is always, however, a small group of men who teach religion from experience. They are called mystics, and these mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth. This is the real science of religion. As mathematics in every part of the world do not differ, so the mystics do not differ. They are all similarly constituted and similarly situated. Their experience is the same; and this becomes law.

In the church religionists first learn a religion, then begin to practise it; they do not take experience as the basis of their belief. But the mystic starts out in search of Truth, experiences it first and then formulates his creed. The church takes the experience of others; the mystic has his own experience. The church goes from the outside in; the mystic goes from the inside out.

Religion deals with the truths of the metaphysical world just as chemistry and the other natural sciences deal with the truths of the phy-

sical world. The book one must read to learn chemistry is the book of nature. The book from which to learn religion is your own mind and heart. The sage is often ignorant of physical science because he reads the wrong book,—the book within; and the scientist is too often ignorant of religion because he too reads the wrong book,—the book without.

All science has its particular methods; so has the science of religion. It has more methods also, because it has more material to work upon. The human mind is not homogeneous like the external world. According to the different natures must there be different methods. As some special sense predominates in a person—one person will see most, another will hear most; so there is a predominant mental sense, and through this gate must each reach his own mind. Yet through all minds runs a unity and there is a science which may be applied to all. This science of religion is based on the analysis of the human soul. It has no creed.

No one form of religion will do for all. Each is a pearl on a string. We must be particular above all else to find individuality in each. No man is born to any religion; he has a religion in his own soul. Any system which seeks to destroy individuality is in the long run disastrous. Each life has a current running through it and this current will eventually take it to God. The end and aim of all religion is to realize God. The greatest of all training is to worship God alone. If each man chose his own ideal and stuck to it all religious controversy would vanish.

—*Unpublished notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda.*

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

Remain always strong and steadfast in thine own faith, but avoid bigotry and intolerance. Be not like the frog in the well, who knows nothing grander than its little well. So are all bigots; they do not see anything greater than their special creed. As you rest firmly on your own faith and opinion, allow others also the same liberty. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

I know not why it has pleased God, from the beginning of my days, to knit my heart to India. So it has been, so it is. Four years ago I landed here a stranger to find myself among brethren. The scenes that passed before my eyes were unfamiliar; the voice that welcomed me to a brotherhood of the spirit was the old, sweet voice of love. The Orient was a new world, yet in the companionship of the Oriental consciousness I felt at home. Your attitude, no less than your spirit, made my way throughout India a path of privilege. Courtesy, patient hearing, the generosity of tolerance were your God-speed to me everywhere, of obstruction and opposition at your hands I had no knowledge. You permitted me to speak, without reserve, not only of more general religious conceptions such as are our common treasure, but of distinctive forms and relations which those conceptions have taken on through the power of Christ and a Christian philosophy and ethics. By the measure of my love for that Christian philosophy and ethics and for that Christ Who is their Source is the measure of my affection and admiration for brethren of other faiths who could not only tolerate, but encourage my freedom of speech. —*Rev. Charles Cuthbert Hall.*

Therefore walk yourself in the ways of righteousness, and teach others also to do so. Recollect that your body will return to dust, but your soul, if rich in good works, will mount to immortality, and partake of the happiness you have already witnessed. Take less care of your body and more of your soul. The pains and aches of the body are easily cured, but who can minister to the diseases of the soul? When you set out on a journey in the lower world, you provide yourselves and take with you money, clothes, provisions, and are prepared against all the exigencies of the road; but what do you provide yourselves with for your last journey of the soul from the lower to the upper world, and whose friendship have you to assist you on the way? The friend who will assist you is God; but to attain His friendship you must walk in His ways and place in Him the firmest reliance. The provisions must be faith and hope and the remembrance of your good works.

—*Zoroaster.*

All that I have heard men tell concerning God, that I have read myself, or perceived of Him in my mind, cannot content me. Infinite is His perfection, how can He be portrayed, or how can man find words to picture Him? Faith alone can reveal Him or teach me what He is; by faith I learn more of God, and in a very little time, than I could do in the schools after many a long year. Oh! faith, faith; oh! marvellous virtue, which illumines the spirit of man and leads him to the knowledge of his Creator. Oh! virtue altogether lovely, so little known, and still less practised, yet which, once known, is so glorious, so full of unspeakable blessing.

—*Spiritual Maxims of Brother Lawrence.*

FAITH AND SUPERSTITION

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

All the recognized religions of the world are based on faith. By recognized religions I mean those founded by the great Saviours or Seers of Truth. This faith comes through direct perception or through communion with the Supreme. It is not a blind acceptance of Truth, but an actual perceiving; and for that reason it can be the only true basis of all religion. Christ said that He saw God, so did other Saviours and prophets; and this seeing is the only thing that can give real faith and conviction. Everything indeed lies in this seeing, in the God-vision; all other faith comes from that source. What we have seen, about that we do not doubt any more. So we understand by this that real faith can come only after we have seen, after we have realized.

This direct vision of Truth alone can give us the stamp of authority in the spiritual kingdom. Whenever we make statements concerning the invisible realm, doubt, suspicion, even opposition often arise in the minds of others; and only when we have had the actual perception of the things of that realm, can we stand with firmness and determination. The mere collecting of facts from books or other external sources is not enough to give us genuine faith; therefore, we cannot expect anyone else to be convinced by our words until we ourselves have gained conviction through direct experience. Our words never carry any weight until our thoughts are pregnant with wisdom, and wisdom is the outcome of actual vision. When we know about a thing definitely, even if the whole world rises in opposition, we cannot be shaken

or made to believe otherwise. Why has Jesus the Christ, why have all Divine manifestations been undaunted by the world? Why have they carried out their mission so fearlessly—often in the face of hatred and persecution? Because they had realized the Truth and hence bore the stamp of authority.

Dogmas and doctrines, ceremonies and rituals are only to help us gain this realization of Truth, upon which our faith must rest. Every church has its rituals; but this ceremonial side is observed merely in order to lead us to higher understanding. So long as we follow these forms with the right spirit, we have true faith; when, however, we forget the real aim of these outer observances and go through them mechanically, then it becomes superstition. All great teachers have prescribed certain rules and regulations for worship in order to bring out real devotion in our hearts and so make us perfect. But when we lose sight of the true meaning of these rules and merely follow them out of habit or from tradition, then we grow superstitious and reap no spiritual benefit.

The true spirit of worship lies in the mental attitude and not in the outward action. It is the thought that is the leading power. When we do anything with the right thought, only then do we get the right result. Otherwise we gain nothing. Thus in the temples they wave lights, place flowers, burn incense; but all these things have no value apart from the inner feeling which first prompted them. Unless the love of the heart gives life and substance to these outer forms, they are dead and fruitless. The worship of God must be a living thing, for God

is a living God and the devotee must worship Him with a living spirit of faith and love. When we offer a flower at the feet of the Ideal, that flower is the symbol of the devotion of our hearts; and when we do not have that devotion, even if we buy all the flowers in the world and offer them, we profit nothing. In the same way, the candles symbolize the light of wisdom. If we have a clear understanding of this and light the candles on our altar with full consciousness of the meaning of the act, then we gain the light of wisdom and all the clouds of doubt and ignorance are dispelled.

So-called intellectual people often criticize those who observe these forms and have faith in God, considering them irrational and unthinking. But which one is really unthinking and irrational,—the man who trusts in the Infinite and Unchangeable or he who clings to the changeable and the finite? Every man and woman with any experience whatsoever must know the fleeting and unsatisfying nature of all external objects; yet how often people blindfold their reason and continue to act along the line of habit and tradition, knowing it to be contrary to their higher understanding. What can be more truly a superstition than this? Taking the unreal for the real, the untrue for the true, or calling things by false names is always superstition wherever it is to be found.

There are very few in this world who can differentiate real from unreal and fewer still who have the courage to follow the real. Again and again in life we get a glimpse of the Truth; but overpowered by past habits of thought or by prejudices, we fail to retain it. Each experience gives us a new lesson in right discrimination of

real from unreal, and yet how persistently we refuse to learn it. Every death, for instance, reminds us of the uncertainty of our life, and awakens a momentary desire for knowledge and immortality; then how often we try to cover the coffin with flowers and forget death. This trying to disguise facts by wrong names is certainly not the way to escape from misery. The philosopher, the seeker after Truth, or the lover of God, is at least sincere enough not to deny facts. He realizes fully well the transitoriness of human life, and strives to transcend it through the aid of higher knowledge; while the materialist, although he knows the uncertain nature of this life, clings to it blindly and denies the existence of anything else.

This denial of facts merely because they are beyond the reach of our sense perceptions cannot arise from anything except extreme ignorance and egotism. Ordinary minds can recognize only things which are within the field of their present mental vision. Those who perceive merely the outer covering of nature, believe that that is all there is; hence when they pass judgment on spiritual things, they are unable to go beyond the threshold of outer forms and therefore regard all worship of God as idolatry. They cannot conceive any idea of life or happiness apart from their physical body and external surroundings. This of course makes them too limited to comprehend the attitude of a lover of God, whose whole interest is directed towards the essence of being. For this reason the mind that is dead to spiritual things can only comprehend dead, material forms or the outer image, while the devotee or the finer mind can penetrate the outer form and perceive the inner spirit.

Hence that which is a constant source of joy and inspiration to the one is a closed book for the other.

Among those who may have some religious understanding there arises another difficulty far greater. When we are born and brought up in a certain creed and have formed certain fixed ideas about religion, we are inclined to believe that there cannot be any other way to Truth beside our own; and we become extremely narrow and self-centred. We look upon all other forms of faith as superstitious and false and condemn their followers as heathen and unbelievers. Such feelings, which often lead to hideous fanaticism and denunciation, arise from our partial vision of Truth. No one creed or set of doctrines or dogmas can represent the whole of the Infinite and we become irrational and really superstitious when we try to measure the Infinite with the finite mind. All condemnation, therefore, is superstition; because it is the result of ignorance and short-sightedness. The man of genuine faith, who has perceived the Truth directly, knows that it is the same Ideal which underlies all the different creeds and sects, so he hates none and condemns none.

Faith is a great thing. It is absolutely necessary for spiritual growth. There are, however, varying conceptions of what faith is. Some define it as trust in God or in a super-natural power, others as belief in some special Saviour or creed, still others define it as trust in their own higher Self; but however divergent these various standards of faith may appear, the purpose of all is to uplift mankind by giving a mightier Ideal to live by than can be found in the physical realm.

To have faith in the great Saviours and Scriptures is a fundamental teaching of every religion. But why should we have faith in these Teachers and Scriptures? Why can we not gain the goal for ourselves? Because we are too weak to discover the Truth by our personal effort. Our strength is not great enough. The constant thought of the physical body and the habit of identifying ourselves with it has made us weak. But these God-men, by living the right life, have grown strong enough to see the Truth, and when we have faith in them, we actually see the Truth through them and by their help. Just as when we do not know the way to some place, we require the assistance of a guide to point out the road; similarly we have need of these spiritual guides to show us the way to God. Truth does not exist outside ourselves. It is within, and through the aid of these wise ones we can remove the veil that hides it. They come to help mankind. Their whole life is a voluntary sacrifice for the good of humanity and so we can trust their realization. Believing in them, we also believe in the Scriptures, because all Scriptures are nothing but the record of the realization of these Seers of Truth. Having seen it, they have passed it on in this form.

But we cannot have faith in prophets, Scriptures or in God without first having faith in ourselves. We read in the Kathopanishad the story of Nachiketas, a boy who was possessed of the true faith which is based on knowledge. His father had vowed to offer up all his wealth to the Lord. At the moment of sacrifice, however, he gave only the poorest of his cattle. His son, Nachiketas, saw that his father was not acting rightly, but that for the sake of name and

fame he was doing something which would only lead him to darkness. Thinking that the sacrifice of his own life would redeem his father's error, he urged him to remain faithful to his promise and offer up his son. He knew that truthfulness is the greatest virtue. Without it we can never realize the Truth and Nachiketas wished to preserve the glory of his ancestors who had always served the Truth. The father, unable to resist his persistent appeal, gave him as sacrifice. Nachiketas went to the realm of death and waited three days and three nights for Yama, the Ruler. Yama desiring to atone for this breach of hospitality in having kept his holy guest waiting, offered him three boons, and as the last one Nachiketas begged to know the secret of death. But Yama wished first to test the sincerity of the boy, and offered him wealth, long life and beautiful women. Nachiketas, however, replied: "I do not want such things. They rob mortals of their strength and bring delusion. What is long life? What is wealth? Keep these and tell me about that which is eternal and undecaying." Earthly riches or power could not tempt Nachiketas because he had absolute faith in his immortal nature, such faith that even death could not daunt him; and hence Yama was forced to reveal to him the mystery of death.

We think we cannot live in this world without depending on external things. Parents bring up their children with the idea that they must have a little learning, a little money, a little pleasure in order to be happy and do their duty in the world; but these are all superstitions. To believe that we need external help, the help of the external material world, is a terrible super-

stition. Matter to help spirit! We ourselves must remember, and we must teach our children that we are not the body, we are spirit, pure, immortal spirit. Following the course of physical life, becoming a slave to the body is a superstition. To shake off this superstition we must have intense faith in ourselves, in our higher Self, which is immortal, indestructible and eternal.

A great sage, Vyasa, was seated one day on the bank of the Jamuna when some gopis came on their way to visit Lord Krishna. There was no ferry and they were eager to cross, so they asked Vyasa if he could carry them across. "Yes, but I am very hungry," he replied. "First give me to eat." They laid their offerings before him and he ate them all. With anxiety they watched him and then asked again how they should cross. Then he stood by the river and said, "O Jamuna! As I have eaten nothing to-day, so do thou divide thy waters and let these pass over." The gopis listened in wonder, remembering all that he had eaten, but the waters were divided and they crossed over. Vyasa had faith in his immortal nature. He knew that his spirit was birthless and deathless; that it never ate or drank anything; that it was above all physical needs; and it was of this nature that he was conscious when he spoke.

There are men who believe in their spiritual nature as much as ordinary minds cling to their external, physical nature. To spiritual men, the higher realm is so much more real than this, that depending entirely on that and remaining in constant communion with that is their natural state. Therefore that which seems unnatural and abnormal to the ordinary man is the most

natural state with the Seer. We all have some sort of faith—but it is the object of faith, or that on which our faith is fixed, which determines the measure of the power derived from it. The one whose faith is in matter will have a fleeting and finite power, the man whose whole faith is in spirit will have unlimited power over both the visible and the invisible. For this reason faith has been declared to be omnipotent. "For verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." It was His supreme faith in His Father in heaven which enabled Jesus of Nazareth to perform all His miracles; and this same faith in Christ Himself made it possible for His disciples to work even greater miracles.

Have faith in your immortal nature. Know that you are spirit. Those who think that they are limited and mortal, that they are born and that they die, are superstitious. Anything that is weakening, anything that is degenerating, anything that tells us that we are limited human beings is a terrible superstition. By all the means in our power we must overcome it. Let us tear aside this veil of superstition, recognize our true nature, and know that we are eternal, imperishable and immortal.

* * *

One whose heart has become fixed in Divine communion through concentration, beholdeth himself in all beings and all beings in himself, seeing the same God everywhere. He who, abiding in unity, worships Me (the Lord) as dwelling in all beings, that devotee, howsoever living, liveth in Me. —*Bhagavad Gita.*

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

The birthday of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Sunday, Jan. 14th. The usual Service with lecture occupied the forenoon, and at five in the evening the special service in honor of the day was held. A picture of Swami Vivekananda had been placed on the platform surrounded by flowers and plants; and before it were the offerings of fruits and sweetmeats brought by the students. The Service opened with music and meditation, after which Swami Paramananda rose and delivered an address in which he spoke with deep feeling of his Master and the great lessons to be drawn from his life. "We have come together this evening," he began, "to honor one of India's greatest children, one whom she loves and reveres so deeply that to-day there is scarcely a part of the country where his birthday has not been celebrated. In the West you pay highest honor to your military generals, to your statesmen and political leaders; but in India all the greatest heroes are spiritual heroes, and among these in modern times Swami Vivekananda rises preeminent. In honoring a Christlike character like his, we actually honor our own Ideal, whoever He may be, whether in the East or in the West; for such a teacher stands not as a personality, but rather as a living principle. He did not merely represent the spirit of India; his far-reaching sympathies enabled him to comprehend equally the spirit of the West and to see that each had much to give the other. Every nation has a special part to play and a special message to give to the world; and it was Swami Vivekananda's strong conviction that a free and sympathetic exchange of

thought between East and West would make the civilization of both more complete. . . . His was truly a universal heart, and his whole life was a selfless service to humanity. He could not see pain or misery without longing to relieve it, and in the religious Order which, although founded by his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, was almost wholly developed by him, he has given a first place to works devoted to the care of the sick, the distressed or the orphaned. . . . His idea regarding the monastic life was not the ordinary one of retiring to a forest and living in seclusion. He believed it to be necessary for everyone who would gain first-hand knowledge of Truth to pass some time in solitude and contemplation; but after receiving the vision, then he declared that such a one must be willing to come back into the world and live in the midst of activity, sharing his vision with his fellowmen. A practical demonstration of this willing service," the Swami added, "is given each year at the different Religious Centres of the Order of Ramakrishna, when on this and similar days thousands of poor people are fed with the best of food. In Madras the number is usually eight or ten thousand, in Calcutta a still larger number and in smaller centres many hundred at least."

Following the Swami's address Sister Devamata gave a sketch of Swami Vivekananda's life, at the close of which the *Prasad* or blessed fruits were distributed. The attendance was larger than had been expected, and everyone seemed deeply impressed by the Service.

* * *

Because of Swami Paramananda's absence in India, it was necessary to temporarily close the Vedanta Centre in Washington and centralize

the work in Boston. It is the Swami's intention, however, later in the season, to go to Washington and give a course of lectures and classes.

* * *

The various Vedanta centres in America are carrying on their work with earnestness and zeal. In New York just now the chief activity is in the publication department. In Pittsburg Swami Bodhananda is holding weekly classes and lectures; while in San Francisco Swami Trigunatita and Swami Prakashananda are conducting their work with tireless energy and enthusiasm, having three meetings every Sunday, besides weekly classes, a daily meditation and a monthly publication.

* * *

The Ashrama or Peace Retreat at Mayavati, besides its active publishing department and monthly periodical, also carries on a Charitable Dispensary, conducted personally by the Brothers of the Ramakrishna Mission. Situated 60 miles away from any railroad on one of the foot hills of the Himalayas about 7000 feet above the sea level, it has both on its own wide stretches of mountain slopes and beyond them, many settlements of poor people, who look to the Ashrama for help in times of distress. In their Annual Report, recently published, it is interesting to note an increase in the number of patients treated as well as an appeal for funds for a new building, showing that the Dispensary has become a permanent necessity in the community. Since many of the patients have to come long distances, the number reached must always remain small; but it is a gratifying record that in the 8 years since the Dispensary was started more than 5000 people have been relieved.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. MARCH, 1912 No. 3

As long as there is creation, so long there will be variety. But even in the midst of this variety unity may be realized by finding the essence which lies behind creation and supports it. As it is said in the Gita: "All this is strung in Me (the Lord) as pearls on a thread." What we need is to perceive this thread which binds together these pearls, however diverse they may be in shape and color; then we shall not be deluded by outer appearances. He indeed is wise who can see only one in the world of many and many as the manifested parts of that one stupendous whole. It has been the constant struggle of all great Seers of Truth to discover this underlying thread of unity. Again and again we find the idea of universal harmony presented by the different Scriptures, especially those of the Aryans. "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever path, I reach him. All men are struggling along paths which ultimately lead to Me." This is the dominant note of the Vedas. There is indeed no room given to sectarianism or bigotry in the religion of the Vedas. The word *Veda* means wisdom, while Vedanta signifies ultimate or supreme wisdom; and the fundamental principles proclaimed in the Vedanta are not confined within any one creed or Scripture, but cover

the whole realm of religion. Vedic teaching, indeed, is like that connecting thread running through all the different pearls. Vedas, or the eternal laws, are already in every soul. It is not that they exist somewhere outside ourselves. Religion is the expression of Truth already existing in man. This is a great thing to understand, — that all power is already ours. Each is trying to express the Truth according to his capacity; but as we go through the process of evolution, our conception of Truth expands and becomes more and more inclusive. The difference between individuals lies only in the degree of manifestation of the same Truth. A truly universal religion, therefore, must offer a series of gradual steps to suit the various states of individual development. No one set of religious practises and no one form of faith could possibly meet the needs of all men in such varying stages of growth. Recognizing this fact, the system of Vedanta, in order to lend a helping hand to all according to their degree of development, is divided into two portions, — the *Karma-Kanda* and the *Jnana-Kanda*. The *Karma-Kanda* deals solely with the external side of the spiritual kingdom, with doctrines, ceremonies and outer religious practises for the purification and training of mind and body. This portion of the Vedas seeks to express the infinite in terms of the finite and is especially intended for those who cannot go beyond the limits of their mind and senses. The *Jnana-Kanda*, or the wisdom portion, on the other hand, has to do entirely with the inner nature of man, and enables him to transcend external phenomena and come face to face with the eternal, unchangeable and all-pervading Being within him. Religion, to suit all men, must be all-sided. It must be intellectual, devotional and philosophical.

It must have infinite scope. And this idea we find pervading the Vedic religion through and through. The religion of Vedanta stands on the basis of unity and all-inclusiveness. It does not ask a Christian to give up his own faith and become a Hindu, or a Hindu to become a Christian; but it looks upon all religions as paths leading to the same goal. It attaches no importance to an outward change of faith, but insists on sincere and whole-hearted practice of the Ideal whatever may be its name and form. Through the grace of the Divine Being, may each one of us find the underlying harmony existing in all manifested life and attain peace.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

If through the grace of God the real spirit of renunciation come to even a worldly man, then will he be able to overcome his attachment to sense-pleasure and money, free himself from worldly bondage, and attain wisdom.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

The Kingdom of God is within you, saith the Lord. Turn thee with thy whole heart unto the Lord, and forsake this wretched world and thy soul shall find rest. Learn to despise outward things, and to give thyself to things inward, and thou shalt perceive the Kingdom of God to come in thee . . . . He that seeketh any thing else but merely God, and the welfare of his own soul, shall find nothing but tribulation and sorrow.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

The self-sufficient and needy philosopher lives a life truly similar to Divinity and considers the non-possession of external and unnecessary goods as the greatest wealth. For the acquisition of riches sometimes inflames desire; but not to act in any respect unjustly is sufficient to the enjoyment of a blessed life. . . . He is a wise man, and beloved of Divinity, who studies how to labor for the good of his soul, as much as others labor for the sake of the body.

—*The Pythagorean Sentences of Demophilus.*

Child, if you want to be free from bondage, then give up all worldly thoughts and desires as poison. And know the path of Divinity to be forgiveness, simplicity, compassion, contentment and truthfulness and take them as nectar.

—*Ashtavarka-Samhita.*

If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problem of life, and has found solutions of some of them which well deserve the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant — I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we here in Europe, we who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans, and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life, not for this life only, but a transfigured and eternal life—again I should point to India.

—*Prof. F. Max Muller.*

MONASTIC LIFE IN INDIA

By Sister Devamata

In India the religious life is not a distinct vocation taken up here and there by an isolated member of the community. It is the basis of all living. Every child born into a Hindu family may be said to be born into the religious life; every act thereafter is directly or indirectly a religious act; and each new step in the earthly career is marked off by a religious ceremony. The songs that lull him on his mother's lap are sacred songs; the stories that stimulate his awakening mind are of the great saints and spiritual heroes. Has he perchance a toy? It is a miniature sacred image. Does he play? It is at worship with bits of a broken earthen pot as his sacramental vessels. The songs and games of his school-room are most often of the shepherd days of Sri Krishna at Vrindavan or of Lord Rama in his forest exile; and even the scavenger boy as he drives his ill-smelling cart along the country road sings gaily of Divine things.

The first lessons in literature or history are learned in a temple porch or on a school verandah in the cool stillness of the evening, when some itinerant *pandit* chants to the vibrant notes of the tambour the ringing metres of the great epics, the *Mahabharatam* or the *Ramayanam*. Or perhaps in the hushed hours before dawn, the father will rouse his little sleeping brood from their last slumber, and while the mother busies herself about the house, he will teach them of their saints and Scriptures. As the boys pass out into active life, it is the monastery more often than the club which draws them at the close of their day's work; and busy doctors, lawyers and government officials will gather at the feet of some simple, holy man to hear him expound the Vedas or to chant together

the praises of the Lord. With coming age more and more is the daily routine permeated with religious thought and practice; until the man or woman who began by bringing religion into every part of life, ends by taking the whole of life into religion.

Along the way, the Hindu declares, human existence falls naturally into four stages: — child-life, student life, the householder's life and forest life (or a life of religious retirement), each with its special duties and opportunities for spiritual development. Yet it is not believed that every soul must necessarily pass through all these stages in each birth. Since to the Hindu life is not merely a stretch of seventy years, but a consecutive journey through many earth lives back to God, it is quite possible that a man may have learned all the lessons of the earlier stages and be born here with a natural tendency to the forest life. Whether it come at the beginning or at the end, however, to every Hindu this is the highest point to be attained, the culmination of all human effort and achievement; and the man who has entered on the life of renunciation so far transcends all social and caste restrictions that even a king comes down from his throne to bow and touch his feet— though perhaps the beggar monk was once a pariah.

In India, however, taking up the monastic life means a very different thing from what it means in the West. It is not passing from a home into an institution, from a family into a larger household. It is going out into the open, the sky the only roof, the ground the only bed, and chance alms from door to door the only food. Caste, kinship, name, fortune, all are merged in a larger measure of things. The whole human race becomes the family of the *Sannyasi* or monk, every

living being must be equally dear to his heart, every part of the world must be equally his home. Because he seeks to rise above body and ego and realize his soul, he must renounce all that is related to the body and little self,—comfort, ease, money, the special community and associations of his birth. He must transcend the physical, if he would reach the spiritual. Yet all this must be done with no sense of giving up. As a mountain climber reduces his luggage to a minimum and rejoices in the lightness of his kit, so must the *Sannyasi* feel. He is setting out on a journey and he must not weight himself with material possessions and concerns. The wrench of renunciation must be forgotten in the joy of expanding spiritual consciousness. He must be like the man who, having found the pearl of great price, sells all he has to buy it. And when this call comes no Hindu dares gainsay it, for it is the voice of the Lord, before which every human voice must be silent.

Nor are these acts of sudden and complete renunciation rare in India. A religious play at the theatre, a chance word in the street, a vision of higher things in meditation, the touch of a holy man, are even to-day sending men out from offices, counting-rooms and palaces to search for God. The story is told of a rich man in Bengal, who, while taking his evening bath after a day of pleasure in his garden house on the Ganges, overheard a *dhobi* or washerman chiding his wife, because "the day was nearly gone and she had not yet burned her banana stalk to ash." The word "banana stalk" and "desire" closely resemble each other in Bengalee, and Lala Babu, understanding, "The day has nearly gone and you have not yet burned your desires to ashes," started as if suddenly awakened from a sound sleep. Tearing his rich cloth into

a narrow strip, he bound it about his loins, went out from his house, travelled to Vrindavan (the birthplace of Sri Krishna) as a beggar and from that day no money ever touched his hand. He lived on alms, gave himself up to prayer and earnest practice of that purity or singleness of heart which brings the vision of God, until he became a great saint, noted for his lowliness and spiritual wisdom.

Only a few years ago while I was in Calcutta, there came a married couple from the South. They were of the merchant caste, rich and still in their thirties, yet the husband was bringing his wife to take her first vows in religion. "I cannot give myself up to the forest life," he said, "because my brothers have been less successful than I and their families are dependent on me. But my wife has fulfilled her duties. Our two daughters are well married; and I should feel it a great sin to keep her from following out the deep religious longing she has always had. I have taken the first vows of *Brahmacharya* (godliness and continence) with her. Now we shall go home together and wait two years. Then I shall bring her back and leave her with the Order. I know that her life of spiritual consecration will bring blessing to the whole family."

In entering the monastic life, all initiation is given by the individual Guru, or spiritual teacher, who must himself be a *Sannyasi,* or monk. Is he a member of a special monastic Order? Then the neophyte may be regarded as a member of the same Order; but this is a secondary consideration. The initiation is primarily not into an institution but into a new life of selfless devotion to Truth; not into an association with a brotherhood or sisterhood, but into direct companionship

with God. His daily prayer becomes: "O Supreme Lord! Thou art my Mother. Thou art my Father. Thou art my Friend and Companion. Thou art all my learning. Thou art all my wealth. Thou art my all in all."

The first initiation, into *Brahmacharya*, vows the disciple to a life of spotless purity, of absolute simplicity and above all of service. It is believed that only through constant service, perhaps the most menial, can body and mind be purified and prepared to receive the Truth. In the old days the disciple went to his Guru in some quiet hermitage hid away in the heart of the forest, and his daily duties were to bring firewood from the jungle, water from the stream, to cut fresh bamboo poles to rebuild the hut or collect dried palm leaves to mend the thatch. And when these simple tasks were finished, the boy would sit at the feet of his Master and learn from him the Sacred Teachings of the Scriptures. The chief lessons, however, were given not in words but through hourly contact with an enlightened soul. It was the Kindergarten system applied to spiritual training. The disciple was taught what holiness was by watching a holy life. He learned of purity and unselfishness by living with a pure and selfless character; just as a little child growing up in daily association with a naturalist comes to know all the birds and flowers without apparent effort or study. Often days passed by in perfect silence, when the Guru was so wrapped in contemplation that none could approach him. The sincerity and earnestness of the neophyte were also tested in this way. It is on record that a disciple served the great Sankara eleven years before the Master even spoke to him; and in the Upanishads we read of this service stretching over long periods of time before

the ultimate Truth was revealed.

Outer conditions may have changed since then, but the fundamental principles, methods and ideals for the period of *Brahmacharya* remain the same to-day as in Vedic times. It is a life of humble, loving service near the Master, learning through obedience and devotion the lessons of the spirit. Throughout there is no violence of enforced discipline. There is as much of play and simple gayety as there is of work and grave study. It is told of Sri Ramakrishna that one day a stranger, coming to the Temple to see him, was amazed to find the great Paramahamsa (enlightened soul) playing leap-frog with his disciples; and frequently was he heard to say: "I would not have anything to do with a religion that had not a laugh in it." Those who enter upon the life of *Vairagyam* (non-attachment) must feel the joy of the Lord, the freedom and light-heartedness that come through renunciation. It is believed that no one should renounce the world and take up the life of the spirit unless he feels that he is exchanging a lesser thing for a greater, that his "loss" is literally "a gain," as Saint Paul declares. Does he feel this? Then he need not be driven to any rigid training, any more than an eager student has to be driven to his books. God, he is told, is most easily perceived where opposites meet, hence the best hours for meditation are at dawn when night melts into day, or at sunset when day fades into night. Does the neophyte care too much for his sleep or comfort to remember these hours—then what use to ring a bell to remind him? His ear is not yet open to the Divine call, so let him go home and serve God in the world. Does he heed more the hunger of his body than the hunger of his soul, so that of his own accord

he does not curb his appetites—then of what avail to lock him in a cloister? Better for him to live a godly married life at his own fireside. Yet he is not made to feel any sense of failure or degradation in returning to the householder's life. It is equally honorable, he is told, and if properly lived, may lead to high spiritual attainment; but the ideal remains none the less clear in every Hindu mind that the highest state is, as Christ put it, not to keep all the commandments as a member of the social body, but to "sell all thou hast, give to the poor, take up thy cross and follow me." He who goes away sorrowing is not yet ready to pass on to higher things; but he who hears the call, and with a heart aflame with eager longing follows it, for him all the discipline and denial which the vocation itself involves, become a blessed privilege, which, without need of coercion, he practices for himself.

When months or years of selfless service have subdued the ego and a first vision of the Divine has fortified the *Brahmacharin* in his life of detachment, then the Guru bids him make ready to set out on the ruder way of the *Sannyasi*—one who renounces all. Mixing a special natural clay or powdered rock with water, he dyes his cloth the bright orange, typical of the flame of wisdom and renunciation; he shaves his head; and receiving a begging bowl from his Master's hand, he sets out to beg food, which he cooks and offers to his Guru. He then receives the last solemn rites of *Sannyasa* (complete renunciation) and taking his begging bowl and staff, he goes forth alone, with the parting injunction from his Guru to follow his staff, looking neither to the right nor to the left, and never remaining more than three days in any one place, lest some new bondage of attach-

ment seize upon him. Through this first period this staff becomes the symbol of renunciation; and since in shape it suggests the Christian bishop's crozier, one is tempted to ask whether it was not the cross or crozier of renunciation which Christ bade the man take up to follow Him.

The first thought of the young *Sannyasi*, or monk, thus thrown out upon himself, is to make a pilgrimage on foot to all the holy shrines of India. Fulfilling literally the injunction of Jesus to his disciples, he wanders under the burning heat of the sun or beaten by the storm, carrying "neither purse nor scrip." One such Swami known to me, while crossing the great desert of Gujrat in the dense darkness of a tropical night, was overtaken by a band of rude hill men who searched him in vain for money. Wishing to see what manner of man it could be thus alone in the vast waste of sand with not even a *pice* (one sixth of a cent) on his person, they struck a light, and when they saw the youthful face under the shorn head, the orange robe and the little Gita in his hand, they prostrated before him in humble apology and begged to carry him in safety across the desert. For even the worst criminal in India bows down before the *Sannyasi*, and no one commands so much respect as one who has renounced all for the sake of the Ideal. Still to-day, when many go clothed in the yellow cloth who do not wear it worthily, the Hindu welcomes, honors and feeds worthy and unworthy alike, saying: "It is the state of renunciation which I honor. If the monk is not a true *Sannyasi*, that lies between him and God. It is not for me to judge."

Nor are these wholly selfish days thus spent in humble pilgrimage. Through every village and hamlet unconsciously the *Sannyasi* carries the

message of the Lord, and they are the God-appointed teachers of the people. As Swami Vivekananda declares, in his "Inspired Talks," "The beggar monk carries religion to every door." Has any one a doubt or question? At once he brings it to some *Sannyasi* resting under a tree by the road-side or in a shaded temple porch; and often a householder will beg such a holy man to live with him for months at a time and become the teacher of himself and his family. Not men only but women, too, thus wander, so safe that the most timid have gone on pilgrimages of two years' duration, or more, fearless and joyous in the companionship of the Lord. The married woman may go veiled, but the *Sannyasini*, who has consecrated herself to God, walks freely with face uncovered, for no one looks upon her except with deepest reverence. Many of them, too, have been teachers. Some of the great Vedic Scriptures were indeed written by women, and it was from such a learned and pious *Sannyasini* that Sri Ramakrishna took his first lessons.

The early monastic system of India was free from the trammels of organization. It was Buddha who first created the fixed institution of the monastery; and nearly all the monastic systems of the West can be traced to Buddhism. Having broken the crystallization in which hereditary caste had imprisoned society, he laid the foundation of a new and equally dangerous social crystallization in making the cloister the one sure refuge from the ills of life. No one ever preached a loftier ethical ideal than he; but as time went on and thousands gathered within convent and monastery walls, the old ideal of *Vairagyam* was lost, corruptions crept in one by one, until India was sinking under the weight of them and a mighty re-

former—Sankaracharya—sprang up, swept the degenerated remnants of Buddhism out of India and raised aloft once more the pure ideals of the Vedas. The monastery, however, remained, cleansed and purified, and still remains. Not a monastery, however, as in the West, with Gothic cloisters filled with hooded monks, but a simple, barren house, where the one fixed resident is God, while the other inmates go and come, scarcely a handful there at any one time. It is the worship and service of God which determines the whole routine of the day and all is done for Him as if He were an actual Presence in the house. All food is prepared for Him and offered to Him first, all flowers grown in the garden are solely to be laid at His feet at the hours of worship. Is a new class to be begun? The text-book is first laid on the altar and the Lord's blessing asked. Is a new work to be undertaken? The plan is first told to God in the chapel. No one leaves the monastery without taking "the permission of God"; no one returns without coming to the shrine to tell Him of it. The monks live like children in the Mother's house,—going off for long periods in solitary wandering or in loving service to others, then coming back at intervals to rest and pray at the Divine Mother's feet. It is a life of true freedom, in which renunciation and service are the watchwords and God-vision the goal.

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Home of Service at Benares, which has recently come to us, is of special interest this year, since it records the formal opening of the new and

model hospital buildings erected for the use of the Home. Remembering the modest beginning of this admirable work, one realizes of what true love and selfless devotion these buildings with all their modern equipment stand as monuments. An earnest-hearted disciple of Swami Vivekananda, passing along a street of Benares one day, chanced upon an old woman lying ill and dying. With tender hands he lifted her, gave her what care he could, and at last found refuge for her in a distant hospital, already crowded to its doors. Then it occurred to him that other such pilgrims, come to the Holy City to pass their last days in prayer and worship, might be lying thus unseen; so the began to wander up and down the narrow, winding streets of Benaris, seeking the sick and suffering. A band of eager helpers gathered around him and from this "originated the work of relief, which silently begun ten years ago, has grown from year to year and now embraces in its operations social problems, the solution of which has been the despair of statesmen and philanthropists." Owing to the limited quarters of the Home heretofore, it has not been possible to receive more than a few hundred indoor patients during the year, scarcely a handful of those seeking admission. Now, however, the number can be largely increased. The Institution's main channel of usefulness in the past has been the help carried to the aged and suffering in their own homes. Benares is full of old, decrepit men and women, who, having exhausted what little property they have and unable to maintain themselves, lead lives of the direst poverty, often without food and a prey to slow disease. The members of the Home go out

daily seeking such cases of misery, adding them to the ever-lengthening list of those to whom each day a supply of food is carried. During the year 5,953 such starving, suffering persons were fed, nursed and given medical care in their own accustomed surroundings, which means so much to the aged. While one portion of the workers has thus been busy in loving service, another group has spent its time in going from door to door to beg the rice and money needed for distribution. In this way the work is carried on wholly by voluntary contributions—gathered from all sources—for as the Home takes no account of caste, creed or nationality in the service it offers, it has a claim on all classes. At present an effort is also being made to enlarge the field of usefulness by opening a Refuge for the homeless and destitute, who, although bent with age, have often no place to lay their heads.

* * *

The birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre in Boston on February 24th. It began at 11 in the morning with a lecture on the life of the great Teacher. At 5 in the afternoon there was a devotional service consisting chiefly of music and meditation, and at 8 o'clock Swami Paramananda delivered an impressive address on the main lessons to be drawn from Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings.

The offerings of flowers and fruits brought by the students were so generous that they completely covered the platform and altar on which was placed the picture of Sri Ramakrishna. This remained through the Sunday services which were also made a part of the celebration.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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Religion never deteriorates, man deteriorates. Religion is eternal, it is always the same. If you stand before that wall, it will not reflect your image —but let there be a bit of mirror there on the wall and at once you see yourself. So religion is always there unchanged, but sometimes man reflects it and sometimes he does not. The great Incarnations like Christ, Buddha, Krishna, were perfectly clear mirrors which gave us a perfect reflection. They did not bring us anything new. Truth is always there. Christianity existed before Christ. Christ was only the mouthpiece. Mahommedanism existed before Mahommed. Mahommed was only the mouthpiece. Each one was only a reflector of the eternal Truth; but one man catches the light from Christ, so he says, "Christ has given me the Truth, therefore I belong to Christ, I am a Christian." Another sees the light through Mahommed, so he says: "Mahommed has given me the Truth, I belong to Mahommed, I am a Mahommedan." A third says: "Buddha is Truth, I belong to Buddha." So each great Teacher has his followers, who believe that the Truth came from him alone; but they all reflect the same Truth. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that if you will look at the dust of the road at

sunrise, you will see some few particles which seem to be bright and reflect the sun's rays. Even in a heap of rubbish you will see such shining specks. So in this rubbish heap of the world there are such bright spots. The sun of God's wisdom is shining equally upon all, but only a few hearts reflect it. Christ, Buddha, Mahommed give it forth in its full glory. These Divine Teachers alone are Truth; we are all falsehoods. To throw away this falsehood we must sit at the feet of Truth. That is why we must go to these Divine Incarnations and learn of them.

—Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

As the dawn heralds the rising sun, so unselfishness, purity and righteousness precede the advent of the Lord in the human heart.

So long as the heavenly expanse of the heart is troubled and disturbed by the gusts of desire, there is little chance of our beholding therein the brightness of God. The beatific vision occurs only in the heart which is calm and rapt in divine communion. *—Sayings of Sri Ramakrishna.*

As a metal disk (mirror) covered by dust shines bright again after it has been cleansed, so the embodied One becomes glorified and free from all grief by knowing the true nature of his Self.

And when by means of the real nature of his Self, he sees, as by a lamp, the real nature of Brahman (the Supreme), then having known the unborn eternal Being, the source of all things, he is freed from all fetters.

—Svetasvatara-Upanishad.

For all that the reason can grasp, and all that desiring can desire, is verily not God. When reason and desiring end, there it is dark, there shineth God. There that power unfolds in the soul which is wider than the wide heavens. . . The bliss of the righteous and the bliss of God is one bliss; for there is the righteous full of bliss, when God is full of bliss.

—*Meister Eckhart.*

The Infinite Reason alone exists in Himself—the finite in Him. In our minds alone has He created a world, or at least that by and through which it becomes unfolded to us. In His light we behold the light and all that it reveals. Great, living Will!—whom no words can name and no conception embrace! Well may I lift my thoughts to Thee, for I can think only in Thee. In Thee, the Incomprehensible, does my existence and that of the world become comprehensible to me; all the problems of being are solved, and the most perfect harmony reigns. I veil my face before Thee and lay my finger on my lips.

—*Fichte.*

"Then in this way know God, as having in Himself as thoughts the whole Cosmos itself. . . If, then, thou dost not make thyself like unto God, thou canst not know Him. For like is knowable to like (alone). Make, then, thyself to grow to the same stature as the Greatness which transcends all measure; leap forth from every body; transcend all time; become Eternity; and thus shalt thou know God."

—*Hermes Trismegistus.*

RELIGION, ITS METHODS AND PURPOSE

Unpublished Lecture By

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

In studying the religions of the world we generally find two methods of procedure. The one is from God to man. That is to say, we have the Semitic group of religions, in which the idea of God comes almost from the very first, and, strangely enough, without any idea of soul. It was very remarkable amongst the ancient Hebrews that, until very recent periods in their history, they never evolved any idea of a human soul. Man was composed of certain mind and material particles, and that was all. With death everything ended. But, on the other hand, there was a most wonderful idea of God evolved by the same race. This is one of the methods of procedure. The other is through man to God. The second is peculiarly Aryan and the first is peculiarly Semitic. The Aryan first began with the soul. His ideas of God were hazy, indistinguishable, not very clear; but as his idea of the human soul began to be clearer, his idea of God began to be clearer in the same proportion. So the inquiry in the Vedas was always through the soul. All the knowledge they got of God was through the human soul; and, as such, the peculiar stamp that has been left upon their whole cycle of philosophy is that introspective search after Divinity. The Aryan man was always seeking Divinity inside his own self. It became, in course of time, natural, characteristic. It is remarkable in their art and in their commonest dealings. Even at the present time, if we take a European picture of a man in a religious attitude, the painter always makes his subject point his eyes upwards, looking outside of nature for God, looking up into the skies. In

India, on the other hand, the religious attitude is always presented by making the subject close his eyes. He is, as it were, looking inward.

These are the two subjects of study for man, external and internal nature; and though at first these seem to be contradictory, yet external nature must, to the ordinary man, be entirely composed of internal nature, the world of thought. The majority of philosophies in every country, especially in the West, have started with the assumption that these two, matter and mind, are contradictory existences; but in the long run we shall find that they converge towards each other, and in the end unite and form an infinite whole. So it is not that by this analysis I mean a higher or lower standpoint with regard to the subject. I do not mean that those who want to search after truth through external nature are wrong, nor that those who want to search after truth through internal nature are higher. These are the two modes of procedure. Both of them must live; both of them must be studied; and in the end we shall find that they meet. We shall see that neither is the body antagonistic to the mind, nor the mind to the body; although we find many persons who think that this body is nothing. In old times, every country was full of people who thought this body was only a disease, a sin, or something of that kind. Later on, however, we see how, as it was taught in the Vedas, this body melts into the mind, and the mind into the body.

You must remember the one theme that runs through all the Vedas;—"Just as by the knowledge of one lump of clay we know all the clay that is in the universe, so what is that, knowing which we know everything else?"—This, expressed more or less clearly, is the theme of all human knowledge.

It is the finding of a Unity towards which we are all going. Every action of our lives, the most material, the grossest as well as the finest, the highest, the most spiritual, is alike tending towards this one ideal, the finding of Unity. A man is single. He marries. Apparently it may be a selfish act, but at the same time, the impulsion, the motive power, is to find that Unity. He has children, he has friends, he loves his country, he loves the world, and ends by loving the whole universe. Irresistibly we are impelled towards that perfection which consists in finding the Unity, killing this little self and making ourselves broader and broader. This is the goal, the end towards which the universe is rushing. Every atom is trying to go and join itself to the next atom. Atoms after atoms combine, making huge balls, the earths, the suns, the moons, the stars, the planets. They, in their turn, are trying to rush towards each other, and, at last, we know that the whole universe, mental and material, will be fused into one.

The process that is going on in the cosmos, on a larger scale, is the same that is going on in the microcosm, on a smaller scale. Just as this universe has its existence in separation, in distinction, and all the while is rushing towards Unity, non-separation; so in our little worlds, each soul is born, as it were, cut off from the rest of the world. The more ignorant, the more unenlightened the soul, the more it thinks that it is separate from the rest of the universe. The more ignorant the person, the more he thinks he will die, or will be born, and all such ideas that are an expression of this separateness. But we find that, as knowledge comes, man grows, morality is evolved and the idea of non-separateness begins. Whether men

understand it or not, they are impelled by that power behind to become unselfish. That is the foundation of all morality. It is the quintessence of all ethics, preached in any language, or in any religion, or by any prophet in the world. "Be thou unselfish; not we, but thou." That is the background of all ethical codes, and what is meant by this is the recognition of non-individuality, that you are a part of me, and I of you; the recognition that in hurting you I hurt myself, and in helping you I help myself; the recognition that there cannot possibly be death for me when you live. When one worm lives in this universe, how can I die? For my life is in the life of that worm. At the same time it will teach us that we cannot leave one of our fellow-beings without helping him, that in his good consists my good.

This is the theme that runs through the whole of Vedanta, and which runs through every other religion. For, you must remember, religions divide themselves, generally, into three parts. There is the first part, consisting of the philosophy, the essence, the principles of every religion. These principles find expression in mythology—lives of saints or heroes, demi-gods or gods, or divine beings, and the whole idea of this mythology is that of power; and in the lower class of mythologies, the primitive, the expression of this power is in the muscles—their heroes are strong, gigantic. One hero conquers the whole world. As man advances, he must find expression for his energy higher than in the muscles; so his heroes also find expression in something higher. The higher mythologies have heroes who are gigantic moral men. Their strength is manifested in becoming moral and pure. They can stand alone, they can beat back the surging tide of selfishness and immorality. The third por-

tion of all religions is symbolism, which you call ceremonials and forms. Even the expression through mythology, the lives of heroes, is not sufficient for all. There are minds still lower. Like children they must have their kindergarten of religion, and these symbologies are evolved—concrete examples, which they can handle and grasp and understand, which they can see and feel as material somethings.

So, in every religion, you find there are the three stages, philosophy, mythology and ceremonial. There is one advantage which can be pleaded for the Vedanta, that, in India, fortunately, these three stages have been sharply defined. In other religions the principles are so interwoven with the mythology, that it is very hard to distinguish one from the other. The mythology stands supreme, swallowing up the principles; and, in course of centuries, the principles are lost sight of. The explanation, the illustration of the principle swallows up the principle, and the people see only the explanation, the prophet, the preacher, while the principles have gone out of existence almost—so much so that even to-day, if a man dares to preach the principles of Christianity apart from Christ, they will try to attack him and think he is wrong and dealing blows at Christianity. In the same way, if a man wants to preach the principles of Mohammedanism, Mohammedans will think the same; because concrete ideas, the lives of great men and prophets, have entirely over-shadowed the principles.

In Vedanta the chief advantage is that it was not the work of one single man; and therefore, naturally, unlike Buddhism, or Christianity, or Mohammedanism, the prophet or teacher did not entirely swallow up or over-shadow the principles.

The principles live, and the prophets, as it were, form a secondary group, unknown to Vedanta. The Upanishads speak of no particular prophet but they speak of various prophets and prophetesses. The old Hebrews had something of that idea; yet we find Moses occupying most of the space of the Hebrew literature. Of course I do not mean that it is bad that these prophets should take any religious hold of a nation; but it certainly is very injurious if the whole field of principles is lost sight of. We can very much agree as to principles, but not very much as to persons. The persons appeal to our emotions, and the principles to something higher, to our calm judgment. Principles must conquer in the long run, for that is the manhood of man. Emotions many times drag us down to the level of animals. Emotions have more connection with the senses than with the faculty of reason; and, therefore, when principles are entirely lost sight of and emotions prevail, religions degenerate into fanaticism and sectarianism. They are no better than party politics and such things. The most horribly ignorant notions will be taken up, and for these ideas thousands will be ready to cut the throats of their brethren. This is the reason that, though these great personalities and prophets are tremendous motive powers for good, at the same time their lives are altogether dangerous when they lead to the disregard of the principles they represent. That has always led to fanaticism, and has deluged the world in blood. Vedanta can avoid this difficulty, because it has not one special prophet. It has many Seers, who are called Rishis, or sages;—Seers—that is the literal translation, those who see these truths—the *mantras*.

The word *mantra* means "thought out," cogitated by the mind, and the Rishi is the seer of these thoughts. They are neither the property of particular persons, nor the exclusive property of any man or woman, however great he or she may be; not even the exclusive property of the greatest spirits—the Buddhas or Christs—whom the world has produced. They are as much the property of the lowest of the low, as they are the property of a Buddha, and as much the property of the smallest worm that crawls as of the Christ, because they are universal principles. They are never created. These principles have existed throughout time, and they will exist. They are non-create; non-created by any laws which science teaches us to-day. They remain covered and become discovered, but are existing through all eternity in nature. If Newton had not been born, the law of gravitation would have remained all the same and would have worked all the same. It was Newton's genius which formulated it, discovered it, brought it into consciousness, made it a conscious thing to the human race. So are these religious laws, the grand truths of spirituality. They are working all the time. If all the Vedas, and the Bibles and the Korans did not exist at all; if Seers and prophets had never been born, yet these laws would exist. They are only held in abeyance, and slowly but surely would work to raise the human race, to raise human nature. But they are the prophets who see them, discover them and such prophets are discoverers in the field of spirituality. As Newton and Galileo were prophets of physical science, so are they prophets of spirituality. They can claim no exclusive right to any one of these laws; they are the common property of all nature.

The Vedas, as the Hindus say, are eternal. We now understand what they mean by their being eternal, i. e., that the laws have neither beginning nor end, just as nature has neither beginning nor end. Earth after earth, system after system will evolve, run for a certain time, and then dissolve back again into chaos, but the universe remains the same. Millions and millions of systems are being born, while millions are being destroyed. The universe remains the same. The beginning and the end of time can be told, as regards a certain planet, but as regards the universe it has no meaning at all. So are the laws of nature, the physical laws, the mental laws, the spiritual laws. Without beginning and without end are they, and it is within a few years, comparatively speaking, a few thousand years at best, that man has tried to reveal them. The infinite mass remains before us. Therefore the one great lesson that we learn from the Vedas, at the start, is that religion has just begun. The infinite ocean of spiritual truth lies before us to be worked on, to be discovered, to be brought into our lives. The world has seen thousands of prophets and the world has yet to see millions.

There were times in olden days when prophets were many in every society. The time is to come when prophets will walk through every street in every city in the world. In olden times particular, peculiar persons were, so to speak, selected by the operations of the laws of society to become prophets. The time is coming when we shall understand that to become religious means to become a prophet, that none can become religious until he or she becomes a prophet. We shall come to understand that the secret of religion is not being able to think and say all these thoughts; but, as the Vedas teach, to realize them, to realize newer

and higher ones than have ever been realized, to discover them, bring them to society; and the study of religion should be the training to make prophets. The schools and colleges should be training grounds for prophets. The whole universe must become prophets; and until a man becomes a prophet, religion is a mockery and a by-word unto him. We must see religion, feel it, realize it in a thousand times more intense a sense than that in which we see the wall.

But there is one principle which underlies all these various manifestations of religion and which has been already mapped out for us. Every science must end where it finds a unity because we cannot go any further. When a perfect unity is reached, that science has nothing more of principles to tell us. All the work that religions have to do is to work out the details. Take any science, chemistry, for example. Suppose we can find one element out of which we can manufacture all the other elements. Then chemistry, as a science, will have become perfect. What will remain for us is to discover every day new combinations of that one material and the application of those combinations for all the purposes of life. So with religion. The gigantic principles, the scope, the plane of religion, were already discovered ages ago, when man found the last words, as they are called, of the Vedas, "I am He";—that there is that One in whom this whole universe of matter and mind finds its unity, whom they call God, or Brahman, or Allah, or Jehovah, or any other name. We cannot go beyond that. The grand principle has been already mapped out for us. Our work lies in filling it in, working it out, applying it to every part of our lives. We have to work now so that every one

will become a prophet. There is a great work before us.

In old times many did not understand what a prophet meant. They thought it was something by chance, that just by a fiat of will, or some superior intelligence, a man gained superior knowledge. In modern times we are prepared to demonstrate that this knowledge is the birthright of every living being, whosoever and wheresoever he be, and that there is no chance in this universe. Every man who, we think, gets something by chance, has been working for it slowly and surely through ages; and the whole question devolves upon us: Do we want to be prophets? If we want, we shall be.

(*To be concluded in next number*)

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

The special course of lectures on India delivered by Swami Paramananda at the Vedanta Centre of Boston during the month of March, was unusually well attended and deeply appreciated. The Swami took up in turn the philosophy, science and religious ideals of ancient India and related them to the thought of Greece as well as to modern science and metaphysics. True to the spirit which characterizes all his work and teaching, his effort was, not to mark the points of difference between Indian development and that of other nations, but rather to show that Truth is the common property of all humanity. He called attention, however, to the fact that in the universal search for Truth, the Hindus possessed in their Vedas the oldest known records of the thought history of mankind; that while the Egyptians and Babylonians had left us the story of their kings and wars, the Aryans of India had handed down the record

of their struggle towards ultimate knowledge, voiced in the most ancient Scripture, the Rig-Veda, in that question which has formed the base of all succeeding schools of philosophy: "What is that, knowing which all else may be known?" He showed that it was this tireless quest after the essence of all things which had driven the Hindus to the study of nature both without and within, and that to their deep religious yearning was due the development even of such sciences as mathematics. Thus Geometry, Algebra, spherical Trigonometry, decimal notation and their remarkable science of numbers, all of which the world owes to India, grew out of the needs of their religious ceremonies, in constructing altars or finding auspicious times for sacrifices,—as also did Astronomy, to which the Hindus early devoted serious attention, with such success that as early as the fifth century A. D. Arya Bhatta, called the Newton of India, not only calculated the earth's circumference, but also discovered its rotation on its axis and proclaimed the law of *Madhyakarshana* or gravity towards the centre. But, the Swami said, if religion had led to science, science had also been made the basis of religion, so that at no time in the history of Indian thought had there been any conflict between the two. The doctrine of evolution, which had dealt such a blow to the theology of the West in recent years, had been made the foundation of all the religious and philosophical systems of India from the time of the great Hindu sage, Kapila, who lived as far back at least as the seventh century before Christ; and he quoted from Sir Monier Williams: "The Hindus were Spinozites more than 2000 years before the existence of Spinoza; and Darwinians many centuries before Darwin; and evolutionists many centuries before the doc-

trine of evolution had been accepted by the scientists of our time, and before any word like 'evolution' existed in any language in the world."

Of all the scientific achievements of India, however, the Swami declared, the greatest had been the development of the science of Yoga, because in discovering a systematic method for the unfoldment of the higher faculties of human perception, it had led man from the knowledge of external nature to the understanding of his own internal being, making it possible for him to apprehend the ultimate truths of the universe, only perceptible to the higher consciousness.

In expounding the different philosophical systems of the Hindus, the Swami emphasized the fact that although India was the home of numberless sects and phases of philosophical thought, yet all lived side by side in peace and harmony because, differing though they might in secondary details, they all recognized the fundamental fact proclaimed in the Rig-Veda that "Truth is one, men call it by various names." And this, the supreme teaching of the Vedanta, was the underlying theme of all the lectures.

* * *

It is interesting to see in what unexpected places Eastern thought is meeting Western. At Buenos Ayres in South America a Vedanta Centre has been formed under the direction of the Vedanta Society of New York, and already it has a good membership. Five pamphlets containing lectures by the Swamis have been translated into Spanish and published, and a translation of the "Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna" is now in press.

A similar group of thoughtful students was found some years ago in the City of Mexico, and

to their earnest efforts we owe published translations in Spanish of still other works on Vedanta, among them the "Raja Yoga" by Swami Vivekananda.

* * *

The Ramakrishna Students' Home, which carries on its work under the direction of the Ramakrishna Mission at Madras, has just sent us its Seventh Annual Report. It contains a gratifying record of earnest effort both on the part of the students and of those who through their tireless energy make the Home possible. Its purpose is to provide lodging, food, clothes and tuition for boys, who, either orphaned or sons of widows, would otherwise be unable to procure an education. Their ages range from twelve to twenty-two, and they are permitted to attend any school or college, either Christian or Hindu; but unless they maintain a high standard of scholarship, they are forced to make way for others, eagerly waiting for a place in the Home. Beside their regular school study, a pandit comes daily in the early morning hours to train the boys to chant the Vedas in Sanscrit, special religious instruction is given them by the Swami in charge of the monastery of the Mission, and a new feature during the past year has been a compulsory class in stenography at the Home. For their recreation and exercise the students take care of the compound or garden of the Home, and in that sun-parched climate where every plant and tree, to thrive, must be watered daily, there is ample occupation for all. It is certainly an excellent work; and we hope before long it will have the larger and more suitable quarters which the managers desire to erect for it.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I MAY, 1912 No. 5

It is possible for us all to earn spiritual knowledge, if we work with the same diligence as we do to earn our livelihood; and for the Truth-desiring this is the most practical thing in life. The ordinary man works with decision and hope in his worldly pursuit, because he is sure that through his labor he can obtain all his material needs. Similarly, the spiritually-minded man, to supply his needs on the higher plane, must work with the same persistence and confidence. He must also regard these needs to be as real, as important and as attainable as his physical wants; for we can never sincerely devote our heart and soul to an end which we believe to be unattainable.

Our whole idea of what is practical and what is unpractical arises from our acquaintance or non-acquaintance with the different spheres of life. We are all conscious of our bodily existence, hence the body seems to us the greatest reality and we consider it most practical to earn food and clothes for it. But why should we deem it less practical to earn our spiritual livelihood? In the one case we are laboring for the life which perishes; in the other for the life which is eternal. As we grow more familiar with the realm of our spiritual consciousness, we become more and more convinced

of its reality, as also of its practical utility; because increase of knowledge means increase of power. Therefore the one who has attained the highest knowledge—that of the spirit—must be the strongest and most efficient man; and he alone can render true service in all spheres of life.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

As a lamp cannot burn without oil, so a man cannot live without God.

As the street-minstrel with one hand plays upon the tambur and with the other strikes a drum, all the while chanting a song; so, thou world-bound soul, perform all thy worldly duties with thy hands, but never forget to repeat and glorify the name of the Lord with all thy heart.

—Sri Ramakrishna.

Let thy desire be the vision of God, thy fear the loss of Him, thy sorrow His absence, and thy joy in that which may take thee to Him; and thy life shall be in great peace.

—St. Theresa.

The soul needeth no other birth than a turning toward God, and an entering into Him. As soon as the centre of all being is apprehended, there ariseth a joy in the heart that surpasseth all other.

—Jacob Boehme.

When, therefore, the soul is shone upon by God as if at noonday, and when it is wholly and entirely filled with that light which is appreciable only by the understanding and by being wholly surrounded by its brilliancy, the soul is free from all shade or darkness.

—Philo of Alexandria.

He, therefore, who knows It (the Self), after having become quiet, subdued, satisfied, patient and collected, sees self in Self and sees all as Self. Evil does not overcome him, he overcomes all evil. Free from evil, free from stain, free from doubt, he becomes a true *Brahmana* (God-knower).

—*Brihadaranyaka Upanishad.*

If you see a man undaunted by dangers, undisturbed by passions, happy when fortune frowns, calm in the midst of storms, will you not be filled with reverence for him? Will you not say that here is something too great and grand to be regarded as of the same nature as the trivial body in which it dwells? A divine force has descended here—a heavenly power moves a soul so wonderful, so calm, one which passes through all life as though it were of small account, and smiles at all our hopes and fears. Nothing so great can exist without the help of God, and therefore in the main it belongs to that from which it came down. Just as the rays of the sun touch the earth, but belong to that from which they are sent, so a great and holy spirit, sent here that we may have a more intimate knowledge of deity, lives indeed in our midst, but remains in contact with its source. On that it depends, thither its eyes are turned, thither its life tends: among men it dwells as a noble guest. What then, is this soul? One which relies upon no goodness but its own. What is proper to man is his soul and the perfect reason in the soul; for man is a rational animal; therefore his highest good is reached when he is filled with that of which he is born.

—*Seneca.*

RELIGION, ITS METHODS AND PURPOSE

Unpublished Lecture by

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

(Concluded from April Number)

This (the training of prophets) is the great work that lies before us, and consciously or unconsciously, all the great systems of religion are working toward this one great goal, only with this difference: that in many religions you will find they declare that this direct perception of spirituality is not to be had in this life, that man must die, and after his death there will come a time in another world, when he will have visions of spirituality, when he will realize things which now he must believe. But the Vedanta will ask all people who make such assertions: "Then how do you know that spirituality exists?"—and they will have to answer that there must have been always certain, particular people, who, even in this life, have got a glimpse of things which are unknown and unknowable.

Even this makes a difficulty. If they were peculiar people, having this power simply by chance, we have no right to believe in them. It would be a sin to believe in anything that is by chance, because we cannot know it. What is meant by knowledge? Destruction of peculiarity. Suppose a boy goes into a street or a menagerie, and sees a peculiarly shaped animal. He does not know what it is. Then he goes to a country where there are hundreds like that one and he is satisfied, he knows what the species is. Our knowledge is knowing the principle. Our non-knowledge is finding the particular without reference to principle. When we find one case or a few cases separate from the principle, without any reference to the principle, we are in darkness and do not know. Now, if these prophets, as they say, were peculiar persons,

who alone had the right to catch a glimpse of that which is beyond and no one else has the right, we should not believe in these prophets, because they are peculiar cases without any reference to a principle. We can only believe in them if we ourselves become prophets.

You all of you hear about the various jokes that get into the newspapers about the sea-serpent; and why should it be so? Because a few persons, at long intervals, came and told their stories about the sea-serpent and others never see it. They have no particular principle to which to refer, and therefore the world does not believe. If a man comes to me and says a prophet disappeared into the air and went through it, I have the right to see it. I ask him: "Did your father or grand-father see it?" "Oh, no," he replies, "but five thousand years ago such a thing happened"—and if I do not believe it, I have to be barbecued through eternity.

What a mass of superstition this is, and its effect is to degrade man from his divine nature to that of brutes. Why was reason given us, if we have to believe? Is it not tremendously blasphemous to believe against reason? What right have we not to use the greatest gift that God has given to us? I am sure God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, rather than a man who believes blindly rather than use the faculties He has given him. He simply degrades his nature and goes down to the level of the beasts, degrades his senses and dies. We must reason, and when reason shows us these prophets and great men about which the ancient books speak in every country, we will believe in them when we see such prophets among ourselves. We shall then find that they were not peculiar men, but only illustrations of

certain principles. They worked, and that principle expressed itself naturally, and we shall have to work to express that principle in us. They were prophets, we will believe, when we become prophets. They were seers of things divine. They could go beyond the bounds of senses and catch a glimpse of that which is beyond. We shall believe that, when we are able to do it ourselves and not before.

That is the one principle of Vedanta. Vedanta declares that religion is here and now, because the question of this life and that life, of life and death, this world and that world, is merely one of superstition and prejudice. There is no break in time beyond what we make. What difference is there between ten and twelve o'clock, except what we make by certain changes in nature? Time flows on the same. So what is meant by this life and that life? It is only a question of time, and what is lost in time may be made up by speed in work. So, says the Vedanta, religion is to be realized now. And for you to become religious means that you will start without any religion, work your way up and realize things, see things for yourself; and when you have done that, then, and then alone, you have religion. Before that you are no better than atheists, or worse, because the atheist is sincere; he stands up and says: "I do not know about these things," while those others do not know, but go about the world, saying: "We are very religious people." What religion they have no one knows, because they have swallowed some grand-mother's story and priests have asked them to believe these things; if they do not, then let them take care. That is how it is going.

Realization of religion is the only way. Each one of us will have to discover. Of what use are these books, then, these Bibles of the world? They

are of great use, just as maps are of a country. I have seen maps of England all my life before I came here and they were great helps to me in forming some sort of conception of England. Yet, when I arrived in this country, what a difference between the maps and the country itself. So is the difference between realization and the Scriptures. These books are only the maps, the experiences of past men, as a motive power to us to dare to make the same experiences and discover in the same way, if not better.

This is the first principle of the Vedanta, that realization is religion, and he who realizes is the religious man; and he who does not, is no better than he who says, "I do not know," if not worse, because the other says, "I do not know," and is sincere. In this realization, again, we shall be helped very much by these books, not only as guides, but as giving instructions and exercises; for every science has its own particular method of investigation. You will find many persons in this world who will say, "I wanted to become religious, I wanted to realize these things, but I have not been able, so I do not believe anything." Even among the educated you will find these. Large numbers of people will tell you, "I have tried to be religious all my life, but there is nothing in it." At the same time you will find this phenomenon. Suppose a man is a chemist, a great scientific man. He comes and tells you this. If you say to him: "I do not believe anything about chemistry, because I have all my life tried to become a chemist, and do not find anything in it." He will ask, "When did you try?" "When I went to bed, I repeated, 'Oh, chemistry come to me,' and it never came." That is the very same thing. The chemist laughs at you and says: "Oh, that is not the way. Why did you

not go to the laboratory and get all the acids and alkalis and burn your hands from time to time. That alone would have taught you." Do you take the same trouble with religion? Every science has its own method of learning and religion is to be learned the same way. It has its own methods, and here is something we can learn, and must learn, from all the ancient prophets of the world, every one who has found something, who has realized religion. They will give us the methods, the particular methods, through which alone we shall be able to realize the truths of religion. They struggled all their lives, discovered particular methods of mental culture, bringing the mind to a certain state, the finest perception, and through that they perceived the truths of religion. To become religious, to perceive religion, feel it, to become a prophet, we have to take up these methods and practice them; and then if we find nothing, we shall have the right to say: "There is nothing in religion, for I have tried and failed."

This is the practical side of all religions. You will find it in every Bible in the world. Not only do they teach principles and doctrines, but, in the lives of the Saints you find practices; and when it is not expressly laid down as a rule of conduct, you will always find in the lives of these prophets that even they regulated their eating and drinking sometimes. Their whole living, their practice, their method, everything was different from the masses who surrounded them, and these were the causes that gave them the higher light, the vision of the Divine, and we, if we want to have this vision, must be ready to take up these methods. It is practice, work, that will bring us up to that. The plan of Vedanta, therefore, is: first, to lay down the principles, map out for us the goal, and then to teach

us the method by which to arrive at the goal, to understand and realize religion.

Again, these methods must be various. Seeing that we are so various in our natures, the same method can scarcely be applied to any two of us in the same manner. We have idiosyncrasies in our minds, each one of us, so the method ought to be varied. Some, you will find, are very emotional in their nature, some very philosophical, rational; others cling to all sorts of ritualistic forms, want things which are concrete. You will find that one man does not care for any ceremony or form or anything of the sort; they are like death to him. And another man carries a load of amulets all over his body, he is so fond of these symbols. Another man who is emotional in his nature, wants to show acts of charity to everyone; he weeps, he loves, and so on. And all of these certainly cannot have the same method. If there were only one method to arrive at Truth, it would be death for everyone else who is not similarly constituted. Therefore the methods should be various. Vedanta understands that and wants to lay before the world different methods through which we can work. Take up any one you like, and if one does not suit you, another may. From this standpoint we see how glorious it is that there are so many religions in the world, how good it is that there are so many teachers and prophets, instead of there being only one, as many persons would like to have it. The Mohammedans want to have the whole world Mohammedan; the Christians, Christian; and the Buddhists, Buddhist; but the Vedanta says: "Let each person in the world be separate, if you will; the one principle, the unity will be behind. The more prophets there are, the more books, the more seers, the more methods, so much the better for

the world." Just as in social life the greater the number of occupations in every society, the better for that society, the more chance is there for everyone of that society to make a living, so in the world of thought and of religion. How much better it is today when we have so many divisions of science —how much more is it possible for everyone to have great mental culture, with this great variety before us. How much better it is, even on the physical plane, to have the opportunity of so many various things spread before us, so that we may choose any one we like, the one which suits us best. So it is with the world of religions. It is a most glorious dispensation of the Lord that there are so many religions in the world; and would to God that these would increase every day, until every man had a religion unto himself.

The Vedanta understands that and therefore preaches the one principle and admits various methods. It has nothing to say against anyone—whether you are a Christian or a Buddhist, or a Jew, or a Hindu, whatever mythology you believe, whether you owe allegiance to the prophet of Nazareth, or of Mecca, or of India, or of anywhere else, whether you yourself are a prophet, it has nothing to say. It only preaches the principle, which is the background of every religion and of which all the prophets and saints and seers are but illustrations and manifestations. Multiply your prophets if you like; it has no objection. It only preaches the principles and the methods it leaves to you. Take any path you like; follow any prophet you like; but have only that method which suits your own nature, so that you will be sure to progress.

SPIRITUAL ATTAINMENT

Class-Talk by Swami Paramananda

The aim and object of all spiritual training is to give us direct vision of Truth. So long as we do not see things for ourselves, doubts are bound to arise in our minds and doubt is always destructive. Thus, when we hear of God or the *Atman*, the eternal and immortal Self, we question because we ourselves have never perceived It; but when through the grace of the Supreme, our third or spiritual eye is opened and we see the glory of our Divine Self, then all doubts vanish and even if the whole world denies its existence, still we remain firm, because our knowledge is based on direct perception.

Through this higher vision alone can we get rid of worldly bondage. By mere practice of Yoga, or the study of the Scriptures, or by work no one can attain to freedom, unless he realizes the oneness of his own Self with the Supreme Being (*Parabrahman*), or with the "Father in heaven," as Christ declared—the same state as that described by the Hindu sages in *"Aham Brahmasmi,"* "I am that Truth." Indeed our study, our spiritual observances, our work, all are only to help us gain this vision; but when we lose sight of this cardinal fact and do our work thoughtlessly, we miss the goal. "As an ass may carry a load of sandal-wood on its back, but is conscious only of the weight of the burden, without enjoying its fragrance or knowng its value; similarly, those who study innumerable Scriptures for the sake of mere learning, without perceiving their true meaning, only bear the burden like the ass."

Study by itself cannot lead us to the Truth. We study in order to know the path; but when we have known it, then we must close our book and walk on

according to its instructions. Once having learned the way, we must lead the life. It is absolutely necessary to live the life after we have found out the way. We may learn of the path from one who knows it or from the Scriptures; but having done that, we must work for ourselves in silence.

Nothing else can destroy our ignorance and ignorance is like a poison in the system. It disturbs the whole balance of the mind and distorts the vision, making the unreal seem real and the non-essential, essential. The only remedy for it lies in knowing the Supreme or in having Self-knowledge. If we are suffering from a disease, we must take medicine to cure it; merely uttering the name of a medicine is not enough. So, without realizing, we may utter the name of God, but that will not cure our ignorance. Unless we possess real knowledge of the Self, what good will it do to repeat, "Soham, Soham," "I am He, I am He"? If we do not know God and our relation to Him, how can we say that we are one with Him? Without realization, these words will not help us. That alone will bring us strength and light.

This realization is never gained until we go within. As Christ said, "the kingdom of heaven is within." The world is constantly dragging us outward; but when we go inward, that is religion. We must know the essence, the substance, out of which the manifold phenomena of the universe have come into existence; and that is within ourself. So Self-knowledge becomes the highest knowledge. When we know our own Self, we know all. How can we know anything that is far from us? We are the nearest to ourself; and only can we know the universe or God by the study of our own nature. Hence we see that Self-knowledge is absolutely essential, since that alone leads to the ultimate goal.

How can we acquire this knowledge of the Self? We shall have to follow the instructions of those who have realized It. As it is declared in the *Katha-Upanishad*: "The teacher of the Self must be wonderful, and wonderful must be he who comprehends the teaching when taught by a wise teacher. When it is taught by an ordinary man (one who is worldly and has mere learning, without realization) it is not easily attainable." An enlightened soul alone can bring enlightenment to others. Therefore, the man who is a genuine seeker after Truth will try to find such a spiritual guide; but having found him and heard his teaching, he will still have to take the trouble to work out his freedom. If you realize for me, that will not satisfy my soul; just as if you eat for me, that will not appease my hunger or nourish my body. You can tell me how to go to work, but I must do the work for myself. Thus the great teachers point the way, but we must travel along it for ourselves.

The first condition in striving for freedom and knowledge is non-attachment. However we may talk about religion, however we may read and study, unless we have this non-attachment, we cannot go forward, we cannot escape from bondage. But this giving up of worldly attachment does not necessarily mean that a man must leave the world. He may still live in the world, but the world must not live in him; just as a boat may be in the water, but the water must not be in the boat. Even if he runs away to the jungle and attachment still lingers in his heart, he will not find any peace and happiness. The true meaning of non-attachment is taking things at their real valuation,—not mistaking the perishable for the permanent, not setting our hearts on that which is fleeting, but seeking that which is unchangeable. It is through the practice

of non-attachment alone that we can overcome all morbid clinging to earthly things and rise to a state of higher knowledge and love. Unless we detach ourselves from our lower propensities and desires, how can we rise?

The soul is naturally free—but when it is overpowered by innumerable worldly desires, their weight drags it down and makes it believe that it is bound and helpless. When, however, through the practice of discrimination and non-attachment, the individual perceives the intrinsic nature of his soul, at once all bondage and imperfection drop off and freedom is attained. "When that highest vision of Truth dawns, all the knots of the heart are untied, all doubts are cut asunder and all the fetters of Karma are broken."

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

The ancient city of Kankhal in the foot-hills of the Himalayas has been from time immemorial a favorite resort of pious pilgrims, who often coming from the furthermost parts of India alone and without money, have no one to care for them when overtaken by illness. To relieve such cases of suffering, as well as to provide medical aid for the very poor people of the neighboring villages, the Ramakrishna Mission in 1901 established a hospital to furnish "medical treatment, proper diet and careful nursing to all, irrespective of color, creed, caste or sex." Beginning on a most modest scale, treating in its first year only 1054 patients, the institution has been gradually enlarging its field of usefulness, until the most recent report shows that in the last year under review 8786 Hindus—from Brahmins down to the humblest Sudras—28 Christians and 736 Mohammedans were cared for. The total number of cases treated since the opening of

the Hospital amounts to over fifty thousand—and it would have been still higher had not the limited funds restricted the activities of the institution. As in all branches of the Ramakrishna Mission, the work is carried on wholly by voluntary contributions. Through the energy and devotion of the Swami in charge, a sufficient sum was raised to add a special Tuberculosis ward during the past year and it is hoped that further donations will make possible other sadly needed additions and improvements.

* * *

The Ramakrishna Mission, following out its usual rule to furnish aid so far as possible wherever needed, in any part of India and among all classes, recently sent a band of young men to minister to the comfort of the throng of pilgrims congregated at Gangasagore, a holy place of pilgrimage at the mouth of the Ganges. A Hindu gentleman contributed several hundred rupees towards the work and free transportation was given to twenty-two of the workers. As the majority of the pilgrims consisted of aged widows and illiterate people, there was ample need for loving, protecting hands and it is interesting to read of the timely help they brought to many humble souls. The report tells of two old ladies saved from drowning, of others nursed back to life from sudden attacks of cholera, of the dead cremated, and of several hundred cases of lost and bewildered pilgrims restored to their respective parties; simple service withal, yet representing the alleviation of much suffering and distress.

* * *

The French government has sent Madame Alexandra David Neel, Professor at the University of Brussels, to study the Vedanta Philosophy in India.

Madame Neel has already reached Calcutta and begun her work—having visited the Sanscrit College and held discussions with the pundits there.

* * *

During the month of April, Swami Paramananda gave a series of lectures on "Yoga," in which he sought to show that far from being anything mysterious or dangerous, as so often supposed, the Science of Yoga was a plain, systematic method of spiritual education, as simple and direct in its character as the usually accepted methods of secular education; that it offered various specific lines of training, through which all earnest truth-seekers, each according to his natural tendencies, might develop his higher faculties and accomplish "the union of his lower with his higher Self,"—the word "Yoga," indeed, like our English word "yoke," coming from the Sanscrit "Yug," meaning "to join." Since, the Swami further pointed out, the purpose of the teaching was to develop all of man's latent powers, it necessarily dealt with the subtler and more vital forces of his nature, and only as he attained understanding and command over these, could he hope to gain calmness, concentration and self-mastery, or be able to pass into the higher realms of consciousness where Truth could be directly apprehended, which was the final aim of Yoga. The attendance at the lectures was excellent, as it was likewise at the various classes during the month. There has been a marked growth in the Tuesday evening class through the season, and great satisfaction has been felt in the steadily increasing numbers at the daily vesper service. This service was started last October and has been found especially helpful—not only by members of the Centre, but also by many outsiders.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. JUNE, 1912 No. 6

Always believe that the condition in which you are at the present time is the very best condition for you. God is guiding all your movements, although you may not know it; God is guiding all my movements, although I may not know it. When we shall be able to see Him in each one of our movements, then every bit of trouble and anxiety will drop off from us and we shall be perfectly happy. . . . One man guides himself, another is guided. There is a vast difference between these two. The man who guides himself is fully responsible for his actions and must fall hundreds of times before he finds out his blunder. The man whose actions are wholly guided by a higher power, will never make any mistake. All his actions are sure to be good and he will be free from all sense of responsibility.

Can a man ever do as he likes? Never. Sometimes man thinks that he is doing as he likes, but in reality God is directing all his movements. Everything is done by God; nothing is done by man. Then what is the use of man's making any effort—even to be good or to realize God? You cannot help acting. Your very nature is to act. Can you remain perfectly quiet even

for a moment? No, you cannot; because this body is born to act. Your hands, your feet, your eyes, your ears have a natural tendency to action. And as long as you must work, you will always want to do work which will bring desirable results. Now, good actions, virtuous deeds, unselfish work alone bring desirable results. Therefore, as long as you work, you will have to try to be good, to be virtuous, to be unselfish in order to get the desirable results you want; and since God is the most desirable result to be attained, you will always have to strive to realize Him. But you will have to get rid of this ego, you will have to drive out the first personal pronoun "I" before you can realize that God is working through you. "When the self is deluded by egoism, then that foolish self thinks it is working," Bhagavan Sri Krishna says. God's will is the only will in the whole universe. Your little will is only a reflection of that universal Will and only exists because that great Will exists.

If you want to get rid of this egoism, the way to do it is constantly to pray to God, to constantly feel His presence. As the moment the sun rises, moon and stars at once disappear; so the moment you really feel His presence, you will not have to drive away the ego. It will disappear of itself. Your little glory will be lost in the infinite glory of God. Bring God inside yourself. This is the only way to forget the ego. For this reason people make *Japam* (repetition of a Holy Word), so that by repeating the Lord's name, they may fill themselves with the idea of God, until they have disappeared and only God remains. Thus living always in the presence of the Deity, man's mind

will move nowhere else and then the ego will go away of its own accord.

Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

When shall I be free? When the "I" has vanished. "I and mine" is ignorance; "Thou and Thine" is true knowledge. The true devotee always says, "O Lord, Thou art the doer (Karta), Thou doest everything. I am only an instrument. I do whatever Thou makest me to do. All this is Thy glory. This home and this family are Thine, not mine; I have only the right to serve as Thou ordainest."

As a boy holding on to a post or a pillar gyrates round it with headlong speed without fear of falling; so, fixing thy hold firmly on God, perform thy worldly duties, and thou shalt be free from all dangers.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Make it your study, before taking up any task, to look to God, be it only for a moment, as also when you are engaged thereon, and lastly when you have performed the same. And forasmuch as without time and great patience this practice cannot be attained, be not disheartened at your many falls; truly this habit can only be formed with difficulty, but when it is formed, how great will be your joy therein!

Is it not right that the heart which is the first thing in us to have life, and which has dominion over all the body, should be the first and last to love and worship God, both when we begin and end our actions, be they spiritual or bodily, and generally in all the affairs of life? It is

here, therefore, in the heart, that we ought to strive to make a habit of this gaze on God; but that which is needful to bring the heart to this obedience we must do, as I have already said, quite simply, without strain or study. . . . And take heed that your mind wanders not back to the world again; keep it fixed on God alone, so that, thus subdued by the will, it may be constrained to abide with God.

—Brother Lawrence.

Remember on every occasion which leads thee to vexation to apply this principle: not that this is a misfortune, but that to bear it nobly is good fortune.

Love the art, poor as it may be, which thou hast learned, and be content with it; and pass through the rest of life like one who has intrusted to the gods with his whole soul all that he has, making thyself neither the tyrant nor the slave of any man. . . . When thou hast done a good act and another has received it, why dost thou still look for a third thing besides these, as fools do, either to have the reputation of having done a good act or to obtain a return?

—Marcus Aurelius Antoninus.

Thy right is to the work only, but never to the fruits thereof. Be not actuated by the fruits of action, nor take thou to inaction. Perform all actions, steady in devotion, abandoning attachment, and equal-minded in success and failure.

Do thou, therefore, ever unattached, perform the work that ought to be done; for the man who worketh unattached attaineth to the Supreme.

—Bhagavad-Gita.

THE RELIGION OF WORK.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

It is the general belief that the religious life must necessarily lead to the abandonment of our ordinary mode of living; but true religion never upholds such ideas. On the contrary, it teaches us how to do well all that we undertake, so that we may prove ourselves worthy servants of the Lord, faithful to our present position, before being promoted to something greater. This notion that, in order to become spiritual, we have to retire and give up the life of activity, is not in accordance with the highest philosophy. We find, on the contrary, that the greatest Truth-seers the world has ever produced were men of wonderful activity. They were equally mighty and efficient on all planes. The difference between the spiritually-awakened man and the ordinary type of worker lies, not in the amount of their activity, but in its quality and motive power. The spiritual man works with understanding and skill, therefore he accomplishes most with least effort; while the ordinary worker wastes much of his energy through ignorance of the higher laws. In both cases we find the same manifestation of activity. But the ordinary man, being too limited and self-centred to grasp anything far-reaching, works for small ends and reaps small results; while the spiritually-minded man, whose work is free from all ulterior motive because he has transcended the limited plane of ego, works for large ends and he alone achieves true results.

But is there any difference in the nature of work? Is there any kind of activity which is absolutely free from evil? No; there is no work which is absolutely good or absolutely bad. It

is our motive in the work which makes the standard high or low. It wholly depends on ourselves. This life is undoubtedly what we make it by our own thoughts and actions. Sometimes these thoughts and actions are voluntary, sometimes they are involuntary. Consciously or unconsciously we are moulding our own destiny. But every action, whether conscious or unconscious, produces a result and weaves the net of destiny which binds the soul. This is the law of Karma, or of cause and effect.

Karma means work. Everything we do is Karma, and Karma also means the result or effect of our work. This law is inevitable. No matter where you try to hide your face, in the remotest mountain cave or in the darkest jungle, your thoughts and acts are all recorded in the chapters of your life; and according to them you gain what you deserve, whether pleasure or pain. There is none waiting to punish or reward you; but you yourself create your own destiny. Who else can create it? You may say: "The Lord Almighty creates it, giving to one pleasure, to another pain." Even if you believe that, there must be some reason; otherwise the Almighty would be whimsical and partial, no more a God who is merciful and kind. Wise men know otherwise. Through their power of spiritual vision or direct perception, they have found that nothing happens arbitrarily. It is we ourselves who are constantly creating by our work; and what we create we can destroy; what we make, we can unmake. This is the law; therefore we must know how to work.

We know that there is within us a pent-up energy which is constantly finding its outlet

through thoughts, words and actions. Everything we do, everything we think, is nothing but the manifestation of that energy which we have within ourselves. We can use this energy for our best happiness and upliftment; also we can misuse it and cause our own ruin. It can manifest itself in the form of anger or bad temper, which will bring disastrous results; it also can manifest itself in the form of goodness, unselfish love, charity, service, etc. It is the same thing expressing itself in different ways according to our tendency. One who falls back or becomes degraded, has allowed this force to drag him down; and through the proper use of it the same man has the power to uplift himself. Therefore, the sages or seers of Truth teach us never to condemn or look down upon anybody, but always to give words of encouragement and to show the way by which others may know the secret of right activity and raise themselves. Since by our nature we must all be constantly active, what we need is to learn to direct our forces through right channels and avoid painful reactions. And the aim of Karma Yoga is to teach us how we can utilize every bit of our energy; how by the least expenditure of effort, we can accomplish most; that is, how we can concentrate our forces and not waste our energies by doing something which may prove a drawback.

Now what should be the nature of work when we live the life of Karma Yoga? Religious teachers often tell you that in order to be spiritual you must become contemplative, and you are honest when you say that you have no time to spend in that way; so you give up all religious hope and effort, because they are unable to offer you something else which would be as helpful as contem-

plation. Understanding this, the ancient Aryans did not prescribe just one particular method of religious training. They developed different methods suited to different individuals, each according to his particular condition and temperament. In this way no one has to struggle against his own nature. These paths are four in number—all main roads, with various sub-divisions, which provide for all phases of human development, and give each an equal opportunity for realizing the truth. They are the path of work, the path of devotion, the path of self-control and the path of philosophy or wisdom. The first path, Karma-Yoga, may be called the religion of work. It is particularly intended for men and women in active life, for those who have to be busy. To follow it one need not necessarily believe in any religious creed. There are workers who do not even believe in a personal God, but they work unselfishly and their God is the God of Service. Whatever they do, therein God dwells; and blessing comes through their every touch, their every movement, through all their work. In their offices, in their business, in their eating, drinking, in whatever they do, they always carry God, because they hold that as their ideal. And this is one of the great methods taught by the Seers, and which among the ancient Aryans was practised by the busiest men we can imagine,—kings and emperors, soldiers and artisans. They followed this path and attained the same spirituality as those who chose the path of renunciation or the contemplative life.

We must all work incessantly. What we need in life is the right motive. We can work in a way which will bring us the choicest blessings, and also the same work, done with a different

spirit, will bring us bondage. The main secret is to learn to work without attachment. Work like a master and not as a slave. Work for work's sake; love for love's sake. We have a notion that unless we are ambitious and eager for the fruits of our work, we will not accomplish anything; that unless we have strong attachment for a person, we cannot do so well for that person. But this is not true. Attachment is not love. Attachment makes us demand, while love unfolds the capacity for giving. If you really love the art of your work, you will be more interested in how well you can do it, than in how much you are going to gain from it. If you really love a person, you will be more concerned for his joy and blessing than for your own gratification. When you are merely attached to the fruits of your work, and you do not get the result you desire, you become discouraged and give up easily; but when you work out of love for the work itself, no matter how many times you fail to get the desired result, you continue. This constant concern for gain and loss both hampers our free action and impedes our spiritual progress.

"To work we have the right, not to the fruits thereof," this is the motto of all true workers. How often we misunderstand this supreme teaching of Lord Krishna, thinking it impossible to work without setting our heart on the result. But it does not mean that we have to forfeit all the blessings that we earn; it only teaches us how we can avoid unpleasant reaction. Every action must be followed by a reaction as every cause produces an effect. Like a small boat on the high seas, so do we rise and fall with every wave of action and reaction so long as we work with attachment. All our pleasure and pain, smiles and

tears are wholly the reactions of our own actions. No matter how much we may like to receive only the pleasure-giving reactions, it is impossible to get the one without the other. Recognizing this fact, wise men try to rise above this shifting plane of duality and work independently, without regard for the results that may come. This brings tranquility and steadfastness in work.

Great souls, like Jesus the Christ, Buddha and other Divine manifestations, have proved this. Work for work's sake was the main principle in their character and in their life. They could work without seeking personal gain or tangible, immediate result. Whenever they brought the message of Truth, how few welcomed them! How much antagonism they met! And yet they went on steadily, because they were convinced of what they were doing. They did it all through love, with no ulterior motive. If you are helping a person, do not expect that person to be grateful to you. Do not always trade in your love. Nobody can be a true worker without disinterested love in his heart. It is the oil which makes the machine of life run smoothly, and unless we have genuine love we suffer. You, yourself, know that whenever you love a person, no matter how tired you are, you like to do for him with your own hands. You do not allow or trust any substitute in serving that being you love most truly; and your service makes you forget for the time being that you are tired, because the physical constitution is largely dependent on the mind, and mind is dependent on the thought-force; hence when our thought is connected with some noble motive, it brings us refreshment; we can overcome obstacles and life becomes enjoyable. A nervous breakdown does not come because of the work we do

in life. If we have proper understanding, we do not have to suffer from any breakdown. It is the lack of ideal, the lack of noble motive that wears us out; and those who work thoughtfully gradually realize this.

The great thing for us to learn is how to work without attachment. We must always remember that attachment and love are very different things. Love makes us expand, brings more wisdom, more confidence, more strength; while attachment makes us contract, makes us self-centred and limited. It brings all the evil propensities, anger and the like; while the other brings choicest blessings,—charity, understanding, peace. Every bit of our energy should be used for the attainment of our freedom, which also includes the freedom of others. You may say, "Why should we work for our own benefit, for our own growth?" Because your growth will bring the growth of other people. The growth of your children naturally depends on yourself, on your thoughts and actions. They are constantly absorbing, learning from you, what you are consciously or unconsciously doing, and therefore great responsibility lies in your hands. Life is not merely a problem of living somehow or other and only for ourselves, but each life is naturally connected with every other. Therefore we must always consider that it is not only for the well being of our own soul, but for our friends and relatives and all others who come in contact with us that we learn how to uplift ourselves through rightly-directed activity; because true action alone can save us from errors, save us from weakness.

The ideal Karma Yogis—those who follow the path of work—always surrender the fruits of their labor unto God, realizing Him as the doer;

therefore they are themselves never attached. When the reaction comes, when the suffering comes, they do not identify themselves with that; and when the pleasure comes, they are not carried away by it. If they are praised, they do not grow egotistical, believing that they are the doers; neither when they are blamed do they succumb to it, thinking they are responsible. You may say that this will make us irresponsible. No, not so. It leads us to the Christ-like state, "Not my will, but Thine"; and when it brings us to that attitude—that we are mere instruments in the hands of the Divine Being,—then alone we know how to live. Before that, although we may be working and trying to grow, we simply create impediments, great barriers, in our way by our own thoughts and actions. As long as we are unselfish, so long we are the gainers; but whenever we bring the thought of self, we suffer, because we demand. We demand from the person we love; and if we do not get what we demand, we naturally suffer from reaction. Therefore the path of work teaches us how to do for others independent of any thought of return. It is freedom from all dependence in action which brings us real peace and rest.

Karma Yoga says that each is great in his own place. One is living the life of a householder. He need not think he is inferior to one who leads the life of renunciation, to monks or spiritual teachers; because they are fulfilling a duty in life which is their part, and the householder is fulfilling his duty, which is another part. We all create, we all have an equal share in this universe; so we must never have the attitude that any one place or task in life is inferior; neither think that God cannot be attained by living in

the world and doing our duties there. We must never think that, in order to become truly religious and pious, we have to abandon our duties; for it is true performance of duty which brings us great spiritual results.

Thus we see that the different paths which men follow, according to their conviction, all lead to the same ultimate goal of truth. A very beautiful illustration is given in one of our Scriptures to show that religion is not confined to any particular caste or creed or to any social position, that it entirely depends on the individual; that no matter where he is placed, he can become religious and powerful and get inspiration through faithfully fulfilling his duties. There was once a monk who lived the life of contemplation. After several years of practice, one day he was sitting under a tree when he was disturbed by the falling of some leaves on his head, and he found that two birds in quarreling had caused them to drop. This irritated him so much that a flash of light came from his eyes and destroyed the birds. We can always develop so-called miraculous power if we live a steady life; and the monk had gained this power through his practice of austerity. Seeing what he was able to do, he grew conceited and thought he had attained the highest. He left the place and went to a neighboring village for his alms, knocking at the door of a householder. The lady of the house was nursing her sick husband and could not come at once, so she asked him to wait. The monk thought with irritation; "How dare she keep me waiting." But the woman at once replied, "Here is neither crow nor crane," because he was thinking of how his wrath had destroyed the birds and might also destroy her. Surprised, he asked her, "How did

you know my thoughts?" She said, "My son, I have never practised any Yoga; I have never retired from my duties, but by doing them I have gained this clear sight." The ascetic then bowed down before her and begged to be taught by her; but the lady told him to go to a butcher, who lived in a certain village and who would explain to him more about higher truth. He was at first shocked to think that he was to go to a butcher for spiritual instruction, but after his experience with the lady he dared not refuse.

He found the butcher engaged in his work of cutting and selling meat. When he had attended to all his duties—closing his stall, washing and feeding his aged parents—he came to the ascetic and inquired what service he could render him. The ascetic then asked him many questions regarding the soul, its relation to God and other difficult problems, to which the butcher replied in a simple manner; and the illumined words which he spoke are known as the Vyadha-Gita or "The Song of the Butcher." After listening to him, the ascetic asked: "Why do you, with all this wonderful wisdom, follow such an unclean trade?" He replied, "My son, there is nothing unclean in life. No duty is impure or low. It all depends on our own mental attitude. The Lord has placed me in this position; I have tried to do my duty faithfully and without attachment and all that I have gained has come through that."

So we find that there is nothing which is unholy for a true worker, there is nothing mean or low. Whatever he does, he may bring the choicest blessings through his work, if he has the right spirit; and that is what we have to learn. Live in the world as Lord Krishna teaches, like a lotus leaf, which grows in water but is never hurt or

even wet by the water. This life is given to us by the Lord Almighty. The entire universe is before us. It creates bondage for those who do not know how to use it, but gives freedom, peace and blessing to those who know how. Live in this world freely. You are a child of God. All is given you by Him. Do not be attached to things; do not be attached in a narrow sense. Have a broad view of life. Do not cling to things which are non-essential. All work should be performed for the purification of your soul; not with the idea of earning wages, but with some really noble ideal. Know that you are going to realize your ideal, you are going to become great; you have capacity, you have ability. You can become Divine, Godlike. It is the right performance of work which makes one Godlike; and also the abuse of that energy makes us degraded, makes us ignoble. Therefore we must always know how best to do our duties as human beings, because we have virtues which animals have not. They do not know how to discriminate. Just the tendency of eating, sleeping, drinking, sense enjoyment, these things we have in common with them; but they have not the power of wisdom, of discrimination, and therefore we must transcend all animal propensities by using the power of discrimination. We, children of God and direct descendants of the Almighty, should not waste our energy for petty, selfish ends, but should learn to work without ulterior motive. Work always bears fruit, work always creates. It can create freedom or it can create bondage. Both ways are open before us,—the path which causes suffering, as well as the path which leads to eternal joy and happiness. So true, sincere souls continue to work, but their work releases them from all bondage.

Our actions are nothing but the manifestation of our thoughts, and therefore we must learn how to think correctly. If we think well, then our work will necessarily become so harmonious, so in accordance with universal law, that we can never do anything which is bad or injurious to ourselves or to others. Those who constantly work with this kind of spirit, knowing that they are instruments in the hands of God, come so near to Him that they can never do wrong, they can never go astray. And that is how we all want to live. Wherever you may be placed, do not cut yourself off from the higher Being. Do not think you are a puny mortal, do not think that you have no great work to do in the world; but believe you have a great work, because you are a child of God, you have a distinct mission in life and you are going to carry out that mission through proper understanding and right action.

When we have a noble ideal, we can never become degraded; the person who has no ideal falls backward. Therefore we must have noble ideals to work for. No matter where you are placed, know that perfection is your birthright. Know that the Christ-like spirit and Buddha-like wisdom are in you, and you are going to bring it out through your own earnest effort; that every instrument the Lord has given you is to be used for your spiritual unfoldment. Whenever we can work without any attachment, that is the right kind of work, which will bring us growth and lead to our final emancipation. Work for work's sake; love for love's sake. It is not that we are going to lose what we have earned; the only thing we lose is the painful reaction, which we wish to avoid.

Thus the Religion of Work, or Karma Yoga,

teaches how we can consecrate every bit of our activity to the Supreme; how we can perform our duty with freedom and love, avoiding the beggarly attitude of expecting return or recognition. When the right understanding of the law dawns in our heart, then even the humblest and lowest forms of activity may become acts of worship and lead to the highest spiritual attainment. As the Lord declares in the Bhagavad Gita, "He who worketh for Me alone, hath Me for his highest goal, who is devoted to Me, who is freed from attachment, and beareth enmity towards no creature, such a person attaineth unto Me."

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

Somewhat tardy reports have reached us regarding the birthday celebration of Sri Ramakrishna in India. In Calcutta during the day more than fifty thousand people came to the head monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission on the banks of the Ganges and from early morning until late in the evening hundreds of boats plied up and down the river, carrying the throng back and forth. A multitude of poor people were fed and the occasion was marked by the happy mingling of people in all walks of life,—caste, creed and nationality being forgotten. At Madras, besides the usual music, addresses, etc., which filled the day, ten thousand poor people were given a generous meal by the members of the monastery; and at the many other Centres of the Mission throughout all India, food was distributed to thousands of hungry poor. Every year this celebration is assuming larger proportions, which shows that the unifying message of Sri Ramakrishna is being heard with ever-growing reverence.

During the month of June Swami Trigunatita of the Vedanta Society of San Francisco will take 30 of the members to the *Santi Ashrama* or Peace Retreat for a time of special spiritual training. The Ashrama is located on a large tract of land in Santa Clara county and has constituted a helpful feature of the Vedanta work in California for many years. While there the students live in tents and follow a strict daily routine under the Swami's personal direction, having fixed hours for meditation and class instruction. During Swami Trigunatita's absence, Swami Prakashananda will conduct all the classes and other meetings at the headquarters of the Society in San Francisco.

* * *

Swami Bodhananda will continue his classes and lectures at the Vedanta Society of Pittsburg throughout the month of June. The subjects for his Sunday lectures are: "Physics and Metaphysics," "Life Abundant," "Steps to Realization," "Repose, Relaxation and Rest," "Arise, Awake, and stop not till the goal is reached."

* * *

Swami Paramananda sailed for Europe on June 1st to be gone until the autumn. During his absence the work of the Vedanta Centre of Boston will be conducted by Sister Devamata. The meetings will continue through the month as heretofore, except the Saturday morning class, which has been closed for the summer. In place of the Sunday afternoon lecture by the Swami at 4, the regular Vesper Service at 5 o'clock will be resumed; and the Thursday class will be changed from 4 P. M. to 8 P. M.

During May the Classes and Services at the Centre were well attended, and the Swami's lectures on practical spirituality were found especially helpful. In all of them the Swami dwelt on the need of acquiring Self-Knowledge as the only remedy for the pain and misery of life. Evil, he said, could be overcome, not by dealing directly with it, but by finding the ultimate Source of all things, and uniting ourselves with that; by attaining that state of realization which Christ indicated when He declared "I and my Father are one"; and the surest way to reach this stage, the Swami further pointed out, was through complete self-surrender.

The Centre has recently published two pamphlets: one, "Religion, Its Methods and Purpose," by Swami Vivekananda, the other, "Faith and Superstition," by Swami Paramananda, both reprinted from "The Message of the East." It is a rare piece of good fortune at this late day to have an unpublished lecture from Swami Vivekananda, especially one in which the voice of the great teacher rings forth with such vibrant living force. In it the Swami defines with remarkable clearness the difference between the Aryan and Semitic methods of religious research and the universal and eminently practical nature of the teachings of Vedanta.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. JULY, 1912. No. 7

Herbert Spencer has declared that with every new physical problem there arises a metaphysical problem, which man can neither solve nor evade. The West, believing a scientific solution of the metaphysical impossible, has devoted itself mainly to the physical; while the East, recognizing that without solving the metaphysical, there can be no final solution of the physical, has turned its chief attention towards the metaphysical. Thus it is that the West has busied itself with nature, the East with soul. Not content merely to trace the missing link between brute and man, it has sought to find that more vital link between man and God; that point where manhood merges into Godhood. Piercing deep down below the surface of things, the ancient sages of India saw that it was not the play of environment on the evolving germ of life which shaped and fashioned it into ever higher forms of manifestation; but that it rose through the beating of its own expanding consciousness against environmental obstructions; that evolution came through the natural and inevitable unfoldment of the perfection inherent in the soul, and the phenomena observed along the way, such as "struggle for existence", "survival of the fittest" etc. were not causes, but accompanying circumstances. As Swami Vivekananda, in speaking

more especially of the higher evolution of the social body, puts it:

"In the matter of the projection of *Akasa* (primordial substance) and *Prana* (primal energy) into manifested form and the return to the fine state, there is a good deal of similarity between Indian thought and modern science. "The change of one species into another is attained by the infilling of nature". The basic idea is that we are changing from one species to another, and that man is the highest species. Patanjali explains this "infilling of nature" by the simile of peasants irrigating fields. Our education and progression simply mean taking away the obstacles, and by its own nature the divinity will manifest itself. This does away with all the struggle for existence. The miserable experiences of life are merely in the way and can be eliminated entirely. They are not necessary for evolution. Even if they did not exist, we should progress. It is the very nature of things to manifest themselves. The momentum is not from outside, but comes from inside. Each soul is the sum-total of the universal experiences already coiled up there; and of all these experiences, only those will come out which find suitable circumstances. So the external things can only give us the environments. These competitions and struggles and evils that we see are not the effect of the involution or the cause, but they are on the way. If they did not exist, still man would go on and evolve as God, because it is the very nature of that God to come out and manifest Himself. . . . . The day will come when men will study history from a different light, and find that competition is neither the cause nor the effect, simply a thing on the way, not necessary to evolution at all."

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

Vijnanis (those who have direct knowledge of God or Truth) have realized that it is the Absolute and the Unconditioned who as the Primal Divine Energy causes the differentiation into God and the World-system, the soul and the universe. . . . . According to the testimony of these perfect men, the World-system is not an illusion, but the manifestation, to the differentiated but purified ego, of a Real Being who has created, or from whom have been evolved the human soul and the soul of every created being as well as this universe.

Until God is seen one must reason, saying, "Not this, not this"; that is, God is a Being who abides quite apart from either man or nature. It is quite different with him who has seen God. He realizes the fact of involution and of evolution: that the phenomenal world and the human soul were involved in God the Absolute, and that they are the forms in which He manifests Himself—forms which have been evolved out of Himself.

Sri Ramakrishna.

In the beginning, my dear, there was that only which is, one only, without a second. Others say, in the beginning there was that only which is not, one only, without a second; and from that which is not, that which is was born.

But how could it be thus, my dear? the father continued. How could that which is, be born of that which is not? No, my dear, only that which is, was in the beginning, one only, without a second.

It thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth fire. . . That fire thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth water. . . Water thought, may I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth earth. . . —*Chandogya-Upanishad.*

What is called evolution teaches that we have reached our present state by a very long and gradual ascent from the lowest animal organizations. It is true that the Darwinian theory takes no notice of the evolution of the soul, but only of the body. But it appears to me that a combination of the two views would remove many difficulties which still attach to the theory of natural selection and the survival of the fittest. If we are to believe in Evolution, let us have the assistance of the soul itself in this development of new species. Thus science and philosophy will co-operate, nor will poetry hesitate to lend her aid.

—*James Freeman Clark.*

The East knew of our theory of Evolution centuries before Spencer established it scientifically, or Darwin applied it to man's story, or Huxley bore down with it so aggressively on faith. It was the cardinal doctrine of the sages of India. But those calm minds, sitting beneath the palm trees by the sacred rivers, thought through the problem in whose outer meshes our hastier minds are too easily detained. Their vision of Evolution only deepened the mystery of the universe. The fact of an orderly and gradual development of life, through the stages of creation, held nothing of the secret of life itself. . . . . Our Western world, gone daft over the fascinating theories of Evolution, and fancying that in it is solved the problem of being in terms of matter, may turn to the sages who had divined our pet theory centuries ago, and to whom it had become a translucent symbol of the Divine Presence and action.

Rev. R. Heber Newton.

EVOLUTION AND REVOLUTION

Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda

Before I explain what evolution is, it is desirable to give some idea of materialistic monism. Materialists all over the world regard the universe as come out of one substance, and that substance goes by the name of matter. What is matter? Until recent times it was thought that matter was made up of atoms. But that theory has now been destroyed. Atoms are no longer the smallest particles which make up matter. Electrons are at present the smallest particles. These electrons, being some of them positive and some negative, attract and repel one another and out of this attraction and repulsion revolution takes place. These revolutions are of different velocity and on account of the various revolutions atoms of different kinds come into existence. Electrons are all one, but scientists do not think that they are the smallest particles into which matter can be divided. They believe that there are finer particles which are known as ether. However, as far as we have gone, electrons are the smallest particles and it is through their various revolutions that we get our seventy or eighty atoms. Out of atoms molecules come into existence; out of molecules come sensible objects; and out of sensible objects, the whole universe, such as we see it.

Charles Darwin, the greatest naturalist of this age, believed that out of these atoms life itself was evolved and he finds its first embryonic form in a sort of viscous or granular body which goes by the name of amoeba. This amoeba has some sort of consciousness. Its body is made up of a substance called matter. It has a will to live, so it strives to protect itself. In its efforts to preserve life, it develops new and higher characteristics un-

til another species is brought into existence. Through the struggle of this new species for existence, a still stronger species is developed; and so by this process, out of the amoeba comes a fish. But the larger fish wants to swallow the little fish and the little fish tries to run away; it develops a will and in its effort to preserve life the fish becomes a bird. Thus Darwin has pointed out how in this struggle for existence, higher and higher grades of life arise; until the anthropoid ape comes and, at last, man. It is in this manner that he accounts for the existence of a Goethe, a Newton, a Shakespeare. These materialistic scientists do not accept anything that they cannot see or perceive with the senses. According to them, two courses of matter are flowing on,—one conscious, the other unconscious. The stream is always running on and the highest development of this motion is the human being. Man in turn goes on developing until the highest man arises; but what the highest type of man will be they are not certain.

This, however, is a general evolution. The individual evolution Darwin, Herbert Spencer and their co-workers have entirely overlooked. Whether a man continues to exist after death they have never tried to decide. As I said before, all these materialistic philosophers believe that everything has come out of matter. From solid matter has come liquid; from liquid, gases; from gases, ether; and out of luminous ether has come consciousness. This consciousness is evolving and out of it will come a Newton or a Goethe. But when Newton or Goethe dies what will become of him? The answer is given, They are extinguished. Newton and Goethe no longer exist, but their influence continues to live. They have contributed their quota to universal evolution. This theory,

however, is very unsatisfactory, for everyone wills to be. And according to Darwin out of that will to be has come the struggle for existence; while out of the struggle for existence, the highest forms of life have sprung.

Now, we ask, since this is unsatisfactory, what will finally triumph? Will it be consciousness, or unconsciousness? But if consciousness is the highest development of matter, then it must triumph. What is consciousness? Consciousness means knowledge. For example, Darwin was thinking of his theory of evolution. He kept on thinking and thinking and thus he evolved his theory. But without Charles Darwin could the theory have come? No. It came out of the brain of Charles Darwin. You remember the story of the weavers. There were ten of them. On their way they had to cross a river. When they got over, one of their number counted and found that there were only nine. Several others also counted and each found only nine. Then they all began to weep and lament, believing that one had been drowned, until a passer-by came and asked them what was the matter. They told him of the loss of their companion. "How many were you?" he asked. "Ten," they replied. "But you are still ten," and he counted and showed them. The trouble was that, in counting, each man had forgotten to count himself. This same blunder the materialistic philosopher has committed. He has forgotten to count himself. Yet he is the alpha. Without him who is to study nature? First he must remember himself. In every process of thought the thinker must be the beginning. And who is he? Is he dead, unconscious matter? No; he is a conscious being, and so out of consciousness all else comes.

The evolution theory, therefore, which fails to

count the conscious being first is inadequate. For the materialistic philosopher, soul is merely a development of matter. Let us take their theory for granted. If it is true that consciousness has evolved out of matter, out of consciousness again must evolve an ever-widening consciousness until an infinite consciousness is reached, and this infinite consciousness must first have been involved. What is the nature of consciousness? Consciousness is nearer to us than dead, unconscious matter. My nature is to live, my nature is to think and be free. But I have not yet realized this nature. The materialist will tell you that when you die, you will be extinguished; but that all that has been gained by you will exist in your progeny. If this is true, in course of time there must develop a being with such a power of will that death itself will not be able to destroy him. He will be beyond the realm of death. And when that comes he will have to be *Satchitananda*—Existence-Knowledge-Bliss Absolute. I may want to live, I may want to know, I may want to be free; yet I may die. But my progeny at some future time must realize all this; and he will exist forever, he will know all and he will be free. If he is all this, then he is God. And if God has been evolved out of matter, he must first have been involved as an all-powerful, eternal, indestructible Being; and he who has thus involved himself, must have been God Himself. He must have been the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer, for He is all-powerful. If then the final outcome is an eternal, free, all-powerful being, that being must have been involved in each one of us. As a whole this consciousness may live, but individually its duration is only for a few years, this is the conclusion of materialistic Western philosophers. Individually man dies, but as a

whole, consciousness goes on until a perfect, all-powerful being results. But the perfect, all-powerful being must have been in each individual.

Now let us see what has been said in our own country. Kapila and others have regarded evolution, not as a universal fact, but as an individual fact. Each individual begins in the lowest state of consciousness and goes to the highest through the intermediate stages according to his Karma (sum-total of his actions), rising higher and higher through the various planes of creation. And how many individuals are there? How many souls? An infinite number, Kapila says. Matter is one, consciousness is one; but those who manifest matter and consciousness are infinite in number. This universe, as we know, is made up of variety. Then how to explain this variety, if matter is one? Nature is one, absolutely one; she is all-pervading. She is the mother of the universe and the father is the soul. Soul has no form, matter has form. The soul you cannot see, hear, taste or smell; matter you perceive, taste and smell. Whatever you can connote or denote of matter, soul is just the contrary. All souls again are similar, but not the same.

This too is the view of Sri Ramanuja (12th century A. D.), who also firmly upheld the idea of evolution (*Parinama*). He declares the soul to be eternal. Ramanuja, however, regards the soul as smaller than the smallest, while Kapila says that it is larger than the largest. Kapila also declares that all souls are one. Of this he gives a fine example. He says that just as water is one, yet entering a mango seed, a mango tree comes, or a jack-fruit seed and a jack-fruit tree comes; similarly, the soul is one, but entering different forms, it takes on different shapes and so variety

arises. He describes matter as that which is limited, while spirit or soul is limitless. Soul also he describes as eternal, all-pervading, indestructible. The nature of the soul is calm, desireless. Matter, too, is desireless. Because it is dead and unconscious, it is desireless; while soul is desireless because it has no want. But if both are desireless, how can union take place? How can creation come into existence? Kapila says, creation can only come into existence by matter getting into connection with soul; and he explains it by the story of a lame man and a blind man. The lame man cannot walk, the blind man cannot see; but if the lame man climbs up on the blind man's shoulders, both can go wherever they like. So in this way, although there is no desire in matter and no desire in soul, still activity springs up when they come into union; and it is because this union has taken place that creation has come.

Now the question follows, When did the union take place? Kapila says, I see that this union has taken place and it must have come out of another union, for union has always been there and will continue; so creation must be running on eternally. But if this union is going on eternally, is it desirable for man to remain in this creation forever? Kapila replies: No, because this is an unnatural condition for him. That is why he is restless so long as he clings to the world. As, however, the soul gradually disentangles itself from the meshes of sensual pleasures, it comes to realize its natural condition. Now all the world has drunk the liquor of sensual enjoyment and has run mad—just like a drunkard who sees a dead rat and eats it, taking it for good meat. Similarly many have drunk the wine of sense pleasures and are running after the world, believing that it will make them

happy. Yet they are miserable. They believe that it will give them life, yet it brings them death. If this be the case with man, how can he hanker after the infinite? Yet until he has attained infinite knowledge, he will have to be restless; for the finite is an unnatural condition for him and he must always be restless so long as he is out of his natural condition. Restlessness always indicates an unnatural condition.

Nature has been described as a beautiful young girl who fascinates the man and draws him from the right path. At first he is deceived by her, but at last he finds that nature is not to be trusted. Nature is a pot full of poison only brimmed over with a little nectar; but as soon as man finds out the poison, he runs away; and that moment the man becomes a free soul. How does man become free from nature? As soon as he discovers her deceitful character, he divorces himself from her, as it were. He says: "I will not take your food, I will not take your water. I do not want your pleasures. I wish nothing from you." Thus Kapila found out a path, following which man becomes free from nature. And what was that path? The path of going, not towards nature, but away from nature; the old path of renunciation. "I must go away from my eyes, I must go away from my ears, from my hands and all my organs."

Next he wanted to go away from his mind, but he did not find this so easy. You look at the chair for one minute; you actually perceive the chair for only one second, the other fifty-nine seconds are in the memory. What is the present? The present is only a point in time. The world exists only in the present; and as the present has no duration, the world does not really exist except

in our memory. It is therefore not difficult to get rid of the present world, but it is exceedingly difficult to get rid of the past and future worlds. However, in course of time man will be able to put down the mental world and then will come perfect calmness, which is his true nature.

The difference between Kapila's evolution and Western evolution is that while Western evolution is a universal evolution and imperfectly worked out, Kapila's evolution is individual and perfectly worked out. Kapila says: This world is a dangerous place. Man must try to escape from it. So he preaches, Give up; there is no happiness here. Evolution here is not evolution, it is really revolution. Like the bullock tied to the oil-press, who may walk nine or ten miles a day, yet does not go away from the oil-press, but always remains in the same room; so we remain tied to nature in the same way. We may be born again and again, but always are we led away by the same attraction to the senses; always the same lust enslaves us.

In nature, therefore, we find things, not progressing, but going in a circle. In creation it is never evolution, but always revolution;—January, February, March and again at the end of twelve months, January, February, March; summer, autumn, winter and spring, and once more summer and autumn; boyhood, youth, old age, and again babyhood, boyhood, etc. It is all a *Samsara-chakra* (wheel of earthly life), an eternal going round and round in a circle. The only evolution is inside yourself. The more you go within, the more you grow strong.

So if you want to have real evolution, real power, you must go inside yourself. The moment you go outside, you dissipate yourself, you scatter your forces. For this reason, Kapila says: Give

up this world which is always drawing you outward. Have no smell even of the world about you. Then alone you will realize your highest nature. And as soon as you realize it, there will be no motion for you, for you will know yourself to be all-pervading; and if you are all-pervading, you are everywhere, you cannot move. Then you will understand the meaning of *Shantih* or final beatitude.

Thus Kapila has worked out his theory until it has become a fact. The Western theory is still only a theory, because it has not been carried to a final conclusion. Beyond Kapila, however, stands monism. According to monism there is no such thing as evolution. Monism says there is only one; there is none else besides myself. Hence evolution is all the trick of *Maya* (delusion or unreality). The whole of this development is only imagination. If you are infinite and perfect, how can you develop? And you are infinite, you are perfect and you are only one. You may be imagining yourself as finite, that does not matter; you may be imagining yourself as many, that too does not matter. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that a flint stone may stay thousands of years under water, but when it is taken out and struck, the spark will still come out. So you may have been living in *Maya* for ages and ages, yet that does not change the fact that you are really infinite and perfect. No evolution therefore can exist in a world of reality. In a false world it exists, but nowhere else. Evolution means *Maya*, means illusion. You have never been evolving. You have been dreaming a big dream for ages and when you wake up, you are at once a Buddha. Then you will know that you have never evolved, that growth or change are impossible for you.

Now let us examine the three theories. According to Western philosophers evolution has been going on in nature from the beginning. According to Kapila, evolution is in the mind only. And according to monism, there is no evolution at all. You are perfect, you cannot evolve. It is all a *chakram* (a wheel) like the bullock tied to the oil mill; and when illumination comes, you will realize that all was a dream. According to the monistic standpoint, there is no progress, no diversion. As one wave of the ocean rises and falls and then another rises, but the ocean remains the same; so the waves of creation rise and fall.

If, however, we look at the world from our present limited standpoint, I think Kapila's theory the most perfect of all. You know that in India philosophy is not a theory. When a man writes out a *Dharsana* (philosophical system), he does not write a theory, but what he has realized, what he has seen; so what he gives is a fact, not a theory. Hence if, with Kapila, you believe in two entities, then Kapila's explanation is the best of all explanations. We must evolve as individuals and the final end of all evolution is to realize that we are infinite and not finite.

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

No abating of interest or activity was perceptible in the work of the Vedanta Centre of Boston during the month of June. The attendance at all the meetings remained as large as earlier in the season. On the afternoon of Sunday, June 23rd, a simple Service was held on the new property, recently acquired by the Centre, to consecrate the ground preparatory to building. It opened with a brief religious ceremony, followed by an Address, in which an earnest appeal was made to the stu-

dents to consecrate even more solemnly the inner ground of their hearts, that upon it might rise a Temple not made with hands in which the Ideal might dwell in peace and blessedness. And they were reminded that on each one of them rested the responsibility of "justifying his faith by his works," because only by the purity, holiness, steadfastness, selfless devotion, and loving tolerance of their lives could they silence all condemnation and misunderstanding and prove to the West, not merely the philosophic grandeur of the ancient Aryan teaching of Vedanta, but even more its religious beauty and practical utility in showing man how to live a truly spiritual life from day to day. Certain passages were then read from the Bhagavad Gita setting forth the special duties and qualities of the true devotee or seeker after God; after which the Service closed with a silent meditation and the chanting of sacred texts.

* * *

The Tuberculosis ward recently added to the hospital of the Ramakrishna Mission at Kankhal, in the foot-hills of the Himalayas, was consecrated on May first in the presence of the President of the Mission, Swami Brahmananda, who, with a number of other Swamis of the Order, had come from Calcutta especially for the occasion. There was also a large gathering of *Sadhus* (Holy Men) and people from the surrounding districts. After a solemn religious ceremony, the President unlocked the door of the new building and, amid deafening cheers, declared it open. After a formal inspection of the ward, the festivities closed, in accordance with the usual custom of the Mission, by serving a generous meal to a large number of poor people, as well as to two hundred *Sadhus* and *Brahmacharins* (those who have taken initiation into the first stage of the religious life).

TO THE FOURTH OF JULY

By Swami Vivekananda

(It was on July 4th, 1902, that Swami Vivekananda passed away. On the 4th of July, 1898, he was travelling in Kashmir; and as a part of a secret conspiracy to celebrate the day in honor of the American disciples in the party, he wrote the present poem to be read at the early breakfast.)

Behold the dark clouds melt away,
That gathered thick at night, and hung
So like a gloomy pall, above the earth!
Before thy magic touch, the world
Awakes. The birds in chorus sing.
The flowers raise their star-like crowns,
Dew-set, and wave thee welcome fair.
The lakes are opening wide in love,
Their hundred thousand lotus-eyes,
To welcome thee, with all their depth.
All hail to thee, Thou Lord of Light!
A welcome new to thee, to-day,
Oh Sun! To-day thou sheddest *Liberty!*

Bethink thee how the world did wait,
And search for thee, through time and clime.
Some gave up home and love of friends,
And went in quest of thee, self-banished,
Through dreary oceans, through primeval forests,
Each step a struggle for their life or death,
Then came the day when work bore fruit,
And worship, love and sacrifice,
Fulfilled, accepted and complete.
Then thou, propitious, rose to shed
The light of *Freedom* on mankind.

Move on, Oh Lord, in thy resistless path!
Till thy high noon o'erspread the world,
Till every land reflect thy light.
Till men and women, with uplifted head,
Behold their shackles broken, and
Know, in springing joy, their life renewed!

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. AUGUST, 1912 No. 8

The greatest name man ever gave to God is Truth. Truth is the fruit of realization, therefore seek it within the soul. Get away from all books and forms and let your soul see its Self. "We are deluged and maddened by books," Sri Krishna declares. Be beyond the dualities of nature. The moment you think creed and form and ceremony the "be-all" and "end-all", then you are in bondage. Take part in them to help others, but take care they do not become a bondage. Religion is one, but its application must be various. Let each one, therefore, give his message, but find not the defects in other religions. You must come out from all form, if you would see the Light. Drink deep of the nectar of the knowledge of God. The man who realizes "I am He", though clad in rags, is happy. Go forth into the Eternal and come back with Eternal Energy. The slave goes out to search for Truth; he comes back free.

Unpublished Notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

People partition off their lands by means of boundaries, but no one can partition off the all-embracing sky overhead. The indivisible sky surrounds all and includes all. So common man in his ignorance says: "My religion is the best." But when his heart is illumined by true knowledge, he knows that above all these wars of sects and sectarians presides the one indivisible, eternal, all-knowing Bliss.

Sri Ramakrishna.

He who hateth no living creature and is kind and compassionate towards all, who is free from selfish feelings and egotism, equal-minded in pleasure and pain, and forgiving, who is ever contented and meditative, self-restrained and firm of faith, who hath resigned his heart and soul to Me (the Supreme Lord)—he who loveth Me is dear to Me.

Teaching of Sri Krishna (Bhagavad-Gita.)

Not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the law and to dwell on the highest thought, this is the teaching of the Awakened.

You must so adjust your heart that you long for the welfare of all beings, including the happiness of your enemies.

If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him, the more good shall go from me. . .

Let us live happily then, not hating those who hate us! Among men who hate us let us dwell free from hatred.

Teaching of Buddha.

Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven.

Teaching of Jesus.

To the good I would be good. To the not-good I would also be good in order to make them good.

Recompense injury with kindness.

The wise man's freedom from grievance is because he will not regard grievances as such.

When merit has been achieved, do not take it to yourself. If you do not take it to yourself, it shall never be taken from you.

Teaching of Laotze.

The mind is one, and the best minds, who love truth for its own sake, think much less of property in truth. They accept it thankfully, and do not label or stamp it with any man's name, for it is theirs long beforehand, and from eternity. . . . Let man learn the revelation of all nature and all thought to his heart; this namely; that the Highest dwells with him . . . . . When we have broken our god of tradition and ceased from our god of rhetoric, then may God fire the heart with His presence.

Emerson.

Let others wrangle; I will wonder.

St. Augustine.

THE TEACHINGS OF CHRIST AND ORIENTAL IDEALS.

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

How often it is supposed that Christian ideals and Oriental ideals are alien to each other and can never converge; that the adoption of one means the abandonment of the other, like roads going in opposite directions. But this idea can only exist so long as we remain on the outskirts of the religious domain, in the realm of creed and form. When we judge East and West from external appearances only, then we find great differences; but they are chiefly in manners and customs and not in the fundamental principles which lie beneath. There is vast difference between the outer expression of religion and the actual assimilation of its essence; and most of our misunderstandings and dissensions arise from variance in forms. Even to-day there can be found men and women in India who illustrate the Christ-Ideal wonderfully in their lives, although they may never have heard about Jesus of Nazareth or read the Bible, and might refuse to accept the Christian creed. What is a creed? The Supreme Ideal can never be labelled or represented by any one creed. Living the life is its only true interpretation; and the East is peculiarly adapted for this. As an eminent Christian Divine, Rev. Cuthbert Hall, has forcibly expressed it, in speaking to the Hindus themselves:

"The contemplative life is the life that puts thought above action, the invisible above the visible, as the major interest of existence; that pays homage first to the mind and the things of the mind; afterward to the body and the things of the body. The life of action is not incompatible with the life of contemplation, but subordinate to it.

And especially is the life of materialistic action subordinate;—the struggle of competitive acquisition, lust after riches, pride of display, arrogance of possession, scheming ingenuity to override the interests or the efforts of another, so as to accumulate wealth. From this the Contemplative Life turns wearily aside, asking only to be left at leisure to think its way onward to the goal of God. May I say that I seem to have found in the East the natural home of the Contemplative Life? Its value, its appropriateness for man, its ennobling harmony with man's nature and destiny, its abiding satisfactions as against feverish struggle for things and short-lived enjoyment of them, many of the West have known. And many more in these latter days, jaded with the quest of the visible, are seeking the path of Contemplation. But behind you and your Seers lies the long Indian summer of the soul, thousands of years of the Contemplative Life. It has given you certain elements of personality, and certain qualifications for world efficiency which misguided imitation of our Western ways could only imperil. You have been Orientals since the dawn of the world. Continue to be Orientals forever, till the world's last twilight closes in the final darkness. Cling to the Contemplative Life: your glorious heritage, your peculiar strength. It has given you elements of personality of which the West stands in need and shall one day come seeking at your hand. It has given you repose, gentleness, patience, gravity, noble indifference alike to material possession and material privation, eternal remembrance of things that eye hath not seen nor ear heard, which God hath prepared for them that love Him."

Religion in the East is not a matter of belief in doctrine, dogma, or creed; it is is being and becoming; it is actual realization. Faithful practice alone

can bring true knowledge of God. No theory or creed can be accepted until it has been verified by practice. What theory can succeed without solid knowledge back of it, i. e. knowledge based on experience? And who can shake our faith when we have true knowledge? It was this which Christ meant when he gave the parable of the two houses: one built on the rock, the other on the sand, typifying the two lines of the religious life, the one of theory or mere belief, the other of practice. In the Hindu teaching we find a similar parable of two servants, who worked in the garden of a rich man. One of them was lazy and idled away his time, accomplishing nothing; but when the master came he met him with flattering devotion and praised the beauty of his person; while the other labored tirelessly and at the coming of his master, said little, but bringing the fruit and flowers he had raised, he laid them humbly at his feet. Is it difficult to say with which one the master was more pleased?

In order to gain spiritual knowledge and strength, we must work faithfully; and we must use the same energy, diligence and tenacity as we now expend for our bodily existence. So long as spiritual culture remains secondary to us, we cannot expect the highest achievement on any plane; for this, the sages declare, is the basic rock upon which all true knowledge and growth must rest. That is the reason why Christ taught as a fundamental lesson: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you"; and why the ancient Aryans of India in their oldest Scriptures asked and sought to answer the question: "What is that, by knowing which all else may be known?" "What is the basis and ultimate goal of the universe?" These Rishis

or Truth-Seers found out the necessity of first "proving all things" to ourselves through experience, thus making knowledge a part of our being. We may talk of Christ and go to church, but unless we apply His teaching in our lives, how far are we from the Christ-Ideal. We must become the thing itself; otherwise if we merely talk of it, we are no better than parrots. As Christ Himself declares: "Not everyone that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." A religious teacher in India is never judged by his power of eloquence, but by the silent example of his life and character. His chief instruction is given not in words but in actions, and for that reason it is the more potent.

The East holds that to become spiritual we must make our thoughts, words and actions harmonious —that is, our whole being must work without friction or contradiction. This is only possible through right-thinking. Thoughts can pollute us as much as words or acts; therefore we must first spiritualize our thoughts; then alone will our words and acts be pure. Otherwise, what avail? The Hindu Scriptures declare, "What a man thinks, that he becomes"; so also we read in the Bible, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he". For this reason, Vedanta forbids us to dwell on the thought of sin; because sin can never beget righteousness. No one can ever gain strength by brooding over his weakness. Hence, Vedanta tells us: "Call no man a sinner. All are children of Immortal Bliss. Let each one awaken his Divine nature by constantly holding his thought on the Ideal." Christ makes the same appeal when He says: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect". Some believe that this is pos-

sible only for a Christ; but, according to Vedanta, the Saviours and prophets come especially to show by their example how all men can attain perfection. Man possesses within himself the germs of perfection. He is already inherently perfect, he has only to manifest it. Why then talk of sin? To think of ourselves as sinners cannot be the Christ-Ideal; otherwise, why should He have told us to be perfect like the Father in heaven?

This conception of the Fatherhood of God did not originate with Christ, as is generally supposed. As far back as the earliest Vedic Scriptures (at least 2000 B. C.) we find the Aryans of India addressing God as Father; and the idea was introduced into Palestine nearly half a century before Christ by Rabbi Hillel, who it is known had imbibed it from the Greeks. Christ, however, made it one of the fundamental principles of His teaching, and thus it has become a cardinal doctrine of the Christian church. Out of this idea of the Fatherhood of God naturally springs the conception of the brotherhood of man. But very often we forget the first and vainly try to realize the second. Yet how can we relate ourselves to anyone as a brother, unless we know the father? The true idea of philanthropy, of charity, of love towards all cannot come to us until we know God's relationship to us and to every living being. Before we can fully believe that man is our brother, we must know that God is our Father. That is why Christ gave as the first commandment: "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy mind and with all thy soul"; and as the second: "Love thy neighbor as thyself". The story told of Socrates and the Hindu philosopher, teaches the same lesson. Socrates, it is said when asked by the Indian sage, "What was the chief aim of life?"

answered, "The study of man". Whereupon the sage replied, "How can you know man before you have known God?"

So long as we deal with the fragments of the universe, we see only differences and cannot hope to attain harmony; but when we come to know the Essence, the stupendous Whole of which all these various fragments are parts, then we realize oneness and true brotherhood becomes possible. Christ taught, "Love your neighbor as yourself"; and the Hindu sages, going one step further, tell us why we should thus love our neighbor. They say, "Thou art that"; that is, in essence you and your neighbor are one and the same, therefore to hurt your neighbor is to hurt yourself. The recognition of this naturally leads to the non-resistance of evil, upon which Christ laid such stress. We can never hope to practice this until we have found That from which all things originate and are able to perceive the unity underlying all the diversity of the phenomenal world. "He is, indeed, wise who can see One in the world of many", the Vedas declare. As long, however, as we live on the plane of duality, so long it is impossible for us to attain this wisdom. A man cannot help resisting evil as long as he is conscious of it. He, who being conscious of evil, does not resist it, is either a hypocrite or weak-minded. But the Christ-Ideal of non-resistance of evil, like that of Vedanta, means that we transcend it; that we no longer recognize evil as an independent existence, but that we only recognize One God who is in every animate and inanimate object. This is wonderfully exemplified in the life of Jesus of Nazareth. All His work, all His miracles, all His sufferings and all His glory were based on this one supreme fact. He never forgot for one moment that His Father in

Heaven was the only Doer, the sole basis of this universe; that all happenings good or bad, pleasant or painful, were wholly in accordance with His will.

Until we have this realization of oneness with the Supreme, it is not possible to rise above all differences and feel true love for our fellow-men. Without it, our efforts in philanthropy and reform can never succeed. We cannot bring humanity together by striving to destroy the outer differences. As far as the essence is concerned, there are no differences; and perfect harmony is attained only when we realize this great truth. Then alone we pick up the thread which binds us all together like pearls on a string, and it becomes possible for us to love even our enemies, as Christ, Buddha and all Divine Incarnations have taught. "He who sees all living beings as his own self, how can there be any delusion or sorrow for him, since he perceives oneness everywhere?' (Isa-Upanishad).

The idea of non-injury is common to all the great teachers of the world. "In half a verse I shall tell thee that which has been declared in numberless holy texts; that is, virtue consists in doing good to others and hurting others is the only vice." (Hindu Scriptures.) We must purify our heart by loving and harmonious thoughts before we can enter the kingdom of heaven. Christ tells us: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift". This belief in the necessity of making peace before any act of worship is so strong in India, that they never begin any spiritual study or religious ceremony without

pronouncing the *Santi-patha* or "peace-verse"; for they know that if there is not peace in the heart, it is not worthy to take the name of the Lord or offer anything to Him, nor can it hope to reap any blessing. We must root out all feeling of hatred before we can know the spirit; and, as Buddha declares: "Hatred does not cease by hatred at any time: hatred ceases by love. This is the old rule."

The great difference between Vedanta and Christianity is that Vedanta declares Truth to be one without a second; it is eternal and all-inclusive and cannot be limited by time, place or personality; the Christ-Ideal has always existed and will always exist, because it stands for a state and not for an individual. The Christians, on the other hand, claim that Christ is the only-begotten Son of God, that before Him God had never incarnated —that the whole Truth is centralized in this one manifestation and those who do not accept Him are regarded as heathens with no hope of salvation. But Vedanta says, how can that be? Can we ever limit the limitless Absolute? Can the infinite be fully represented by any one finite form? It admits that Christ is one of the Incarnations, but not the only one; that before Him there were other Divine manifestations, and that they will continue to come according to the need of humanity. We read in the Bhagavad-Gita: "Whenever religion declines and irreligion prevails, then I manifest Myself. To protect virtue and destroy vice and to preserve and reëstablish religion I am born from age to age".

Such Divine Incarnations occur whenever and wherever there is need for spiritual regeneration. There come times when materialistic thought overruns a nation and spirituality becomes a mockery, existing only in words and theories, in empty doc-

trines and forms; then we need a living example of virtue to reveal to us once more the eternally-existing Truth, and the Vedas call such God-men the Revealers or Seers of Truth—or *Avataras,* the "Embodied Truth". It is not that they discover the Truth, but that they reveal It; or in other words, they tear off the veil of worldliness which has for the time being hidden It. They do not give a new message, they only repeat the one already given but forgotten. As Jesus Himself declared: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." The only differences we find in the messages of the different Saviours lies not in their fundamental principle, but in their outer expression which is shaped according to the need of the age, country and people where the incarnation takes place. It is not that these various Divine manifestations are separate entities, but the same Supreme Spirit incarnates in different forms, like the one father appearing before his children in different garments; and blind and unworthy are those who recognize him in one garb only, denying him when he comes in any other dress. Is it not blasphemy to think that God Almighty is limited to any particular condition, that He is only capable of incarnating Himself once and no more?

Sectarianism creates war and intolerance everywhere; but the Christ-Ideal, when lived, brings perfect harmony and universal tolerance, whether in the East or the West. As the Rev. Cuthbert Hall again says: "As I grew to apprehend the qualities of the Oriental Consciousness, I saw their potential value for the higher interpretation of the Christian religion. It became clear to me that in the Soul of the East are powers and gifts which stand in a significant relation to the higher

truths of Christianity, correspondences which cannot be accidental, between the most sublime aspects of the religion of Christ and the most sublime qualities of the Eastern soul. Many times during the former visit among you I found myself exclaiming, how marvellously is the East qualified to be the interpreter of Christian mysteries; and how marvellously does the profound essence of Christian belief lend itself to the modes of Oriental Consciousness. Is there not here evidence of Divine intention, long unrealized? While the West has heretofore regarded Christianity as its own, an indigenous growth that might with difficulty be introduced to the East as an exotic, can it be that the Oriental Consciousness is, in fact, the natural soil of this Divine plant, and that at last, after many centuries, from the fruitful ground of the Eastern soul, this seed of God is to spring to the perfect type and bear fruit a hundred-fold?"

We too often forget that Christ Himself was an Oriental. The Essenes, we know, had a great influence on the life of Jesus. John the Baptist himself was an Essene; and it is now admitted by many scholars that the foundation of the Order of the Essenes was directly due to the influence of the Buddhist monks, who were sent out as missionaries by the great Indian Emperor, Asoka, about 250 B. C. They came to Palestine, but following their habitual constructive method, they did not seek to proselytize. They merely lived a life of holiness and loving service to others without creating any antagonisms; and they won followers through the force and beauty of their characters, inspiring them to take up a similar life of simplicity and renunciation, such as we see embodied in the rule of the Essenes and set forth in the life and teaching of Jesus.

This has been from the beginning the method of the Aryans of India. They have always believed that there was no reason to condemn any faith or ideal, no matter how crude it may appear. Universal tolerance is the dominant note of their teaching. "He is One without a second", manifesting in the form of a Christ, a Krishna, a Buddha, a Zoroaster; and those who follow sincerely any one of these manifestations will surely reach the final goal of Truth. "In whatever way men worship Me, even so do I reach them. All paths which men follow lead to Me (the Supreme)", the Lord declares in the Bhagavad-Gita. The attitude of Vedanta is that all is One Universal Spirit. The same Truth exists in every faith and when we follow one truly, we follow all; because the same note of truth is at the heart of all, and when we touch it in one, all the others vibrate in sympathy and perfect harmony is the result. As long as we find fault with any faith or denounce any man as a heathen, we are far from being religious. A child of God is never a heathen. Unless we love all of God's children, how can we please the Father? "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

When we comprehend the true Divine beauty of any one of the great Ideals, our prejudices and religious antagonisms disappear. The practical application of the teaching of any one always takes us nearer to the essence of all and destroys the delusion out of which sectarianism grows. Unless we live the life in accordance with our special Ideal, we remain at a great distance from our Master; and are not worthy to call ourselves His followers. How can you know what Christ stood for, unless you live a Christ-life? If you do not

represent His teaching in your thoughts and actions, you merely drag down the Ideal. To take His name, without following His teaching does not make a man a Christian. Vedanta declares that we must never compromise with the Ideal, we must never bring it down to our limited plane; we must raise ourselves to It. We must devote our whole life to realizing It; and if we fail, we must blame ourselves, not the Ideal, recognizing our own limitations.

God is infinite but He assumes different forms for the sake of His devotees; yet the Infinite, according to Vedanta, can never be fully expressed in name and form. Therefore the sages define Him as both personal and impersonal. He is beyond mind and speech. "He is One without a second, but sages comprehend Him differently and call Him by different names." He is all that we are capable of grasping, as well as all that is beyond our comprehension; for how can the Infinite be fully grasped by the finite mind? Even the Divine Incarnations can be only partial manifestations of the Infinite-Absolute; and because no one personality or creed can satisfy all mankind, every phase of religion, from the crudest form of symbolism up to the highest conception of Absolute Truth, is given a place in Vedanta. Max Muller admits this when he says: "Thus the Vedanta philosophy leaves to every man a wide sphere of real usefulness, it has room for every religion, nay, it embraces them all."

Let us look upon life from the God point of view. Then all these outer differences will vanish and perfect peace and harmony will reign. True religious growth consists in expansion, not contraction, it is inclusive and not exclusive. Let us cease to try to override those who differ from us

in belief. Let us work on the constructive basis of love and tolerance, and thus prove ourselves worthy of our Ideal, whatever may be His name.

During the month of August all the meetings at the Vedanta Centre of Boston will be discontinued. They will begin again on September 8th. with the usual Sunday Service and Lecture at 11 A. M.

Most encouraging news comes from Swami Paramananda's work in Europe. On the Sunday of the voyage over he was asked to deliver a lecture on Vedanta, which, according to the report of a fellow-passenger, was listened to with great attention and interest. After a week in Paris, he went to Germany, where for some time past a steadily increasing group of earnest students has been gathering round a devoted adherent of Vedanta. Here the Swami held daily meetings, giving readings from the Scriptures, with a talk and a meditation, besides seeing personally those desiring individual advice; and people "were so eager to see and hear him that the time he passed here was more busy and not so quiet as I wished it to be", one of the number writes. In another letter the deepest thankfulness is expressed for the help received, saying: "He gave us such blessing just by his presence." Before he left the question was seriously discussed of organizing a regular Centre under the Swami's direction, to which he would devote some time each summer. At last accounts the Swami had gone to Italy in response to an urgent invitation from friends there.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. SEPTEMBER, 1912 No. 9

Modern Science is the best commentary on the Vedas. The Vedas mean right knowledge. The word is derived from *Vid*, "to know", just as science also comes from a verb meaning "to know". What is the difference between modern science and the whole transcendental science of the Vedas? The method is the same; but modern science moves over the surface only, while the Vedas go deep into the very heart of existence. Modern scientists analyzed and found that the world was made up of atoms, or as they now declare, of electrons. What is an atom or an electron? They do not say. They do not take us beyond that. It is as if it were preached, "Thus far and no farther". They go to a certain distance and beyond that they do not go. Again, according to modern science the world is wholly material. But matter is always darkness; therefore modern science, so long as it deals with the material realm only, must lead to darkness, to more and more confusion. Matter leads to matter, never to spirit; so through matter spirit cannot be known.

It is not possible to know the Infinite through the finite. We must first realize that we ourselves are infinite. For a finite mind it is impossible to conceive of the Supreme Being. The finite can also never become infinite. You may hold that your mind, although finite, has an infinite potentiality of

improvement. But let us see. Granted that it may go on indefinitely knowing facts. You may learn a great number this year; you may know still more next year; in one hundred years you may have learned more, and after a cycle a countless number. But always the number known, however great, must be a finite number, and compared to infinity will be infinitely small. Matter is that which is limited and which limits. Man now feels limited by coming in contact with matter. We must know that we are not matter but spirit. We must cease to identify ourselves with this gross material body. We must join ourselves to God. When a man does this and realizes his true Self, then all doubts are dispelled, all questions are answered and he realizes the Highest.

Extract from Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

True knowledge leads to unity and ignorance to diversity.

People do not see that science dealeth only with conditioned knowledge. It bringeth no message from the Land of the Unconditioned. Such message hath been brought by holy men who have seen and realized God, like the Rishis of old.

The eternal should be preached through the non-eternal, the real through the help of the unreal, the noumenon through the help of phenomena.

Sri Ramakrishna.

He who knows that indestructible Being, obtains what is the highest and indestructible, the One without a shadow, without a body, without color, radiant, yes, O friend, he who knows It, becomes all-knowing, becomes all.

He, O friend, who knows that indestructible Being, wherein the true knower, the vital forces together with all the powers and all the elements rest, he, being all-knowing, has penetrated all.

Prasna-Upanishad.

Divine Wisdom is true Science. A wise intellect is the mirror of God. He honours God in the best manner who renders his intellect as much as possible similar to God. Recognize what God is, and what that is in you which recognizes God.

Sextus the Pythagorean.

Strive to bring the God that is in us to the God that is in the all. *Plotinus.*

Intuition and intellect represent the two opposite directions of the work of consciousness: intuition goes in the very direction of life, intellect goes in the inverse direction, and thus finds itself naturally in accordance with the movement of matter. A complete and perfect humanity would be that in which these two forms of conscious activity should attain their full development. . . . . The great error of the doctrines on the spirit has been the idea that by isolating the spiritual life from all the rest, by suspending it in space as high as possible above the earth, they were placing it beyond attack, as if they were not thereby simply exposing it to be taken as an effect of mirage. . . . But we must accustom ourselves to think being directly. We must strive to see in order to see, and no longer to see in order to act. Then the Absolute is revealed very near us and, in a certain measure, in us. It lives with us. *Henri Bergson.*

THE INDIAN MIND AND INDIAN CULTURE

By Sister Devamata.

The profoundly subjective development of the Indian mind is not based, as so many suppose, on an innate tendency to visionary dreaming, but on acute practical observation of nature. Their science of the invisible is as exact and empirical as Western science of the natural. Their impetus towards the inner, in fact, sprang from their study of the outer. As far as they could reach on the outside, so far they travelled, observing at every step that macrocosm and microcosm ran in parallel lines. When they could move no further outward, they turned inward, trusting that the same correspondence would obtain. As before, they had learned the law from the macrocosm and found its application in the microcosm; now, forced back by the illusive character of nature on the study of their own inner being, they began to dissect and analyze the microcosm and from that central point penetrate still deeper into the hidden mysteries of the macrocosm. Everywhere the analogy between the two seemed to hold. Thus it was that the first understanding of themselves came through observation of nature; while a deeper study of their own organism enabled them to discover secrets of the natural world forever hidden from the scientist who depends upon microscope or dissecting knife.

Recognizing that they already held within their grasp an instrument more efficient than any man could invent, they set out to unfold all the inherent possibilities of the human mind, and developed a power of concentration and subjective observation such probably as has never been surpassed in this world. They surprised nature at work. They saw the great machine of the universe in motion, and were able to discover and study the relative posi-

tion and function of each part. It was from the living man, the living animal that they learned their lessons; but not as modern science has accomplished it through the horrors of vivisection. That was contrary to the whole spirit of their civilization. It seemed to them a poor achievement merely to draw a map of the human organism; to discover the plan of the nervous system, the place of vein and muscle and tendon. They must see the nerve currents flash their message along the fine wires of grey matter; they must follow the swift-flowing stream of blood through its ramified course; they must watch from breath to breath the effect on mind and body of the great pumping system of the lungs. It was a living, pulsing world which interested them, not a dead mechanism; and the only instrument which could unveil it was a living instrument. The intelligence, they argued, which had evolved through such countless stages from the lowest forms of life, must have the power to review its own work. Hence for the fully developed and focused mind there could be nothing hidden. Like a searchlight, or an X-ray, it should pierce the densest veil of matter. It should be able to penetrate into the heart of all things, above all into the nature and constitution of man himself. The perfect scientist therefore must be a Seer.

As a result, preparation for scientific investigation among them was less in the laboratory than out in the forest or in some solitary mountain fastness. As M. Brieux, a member of the French Academy, writes: "The noble minds of India, without having had the necessity of having recourse to experimental science like us, discovered the truths which we discover after them. By the unaided power of meditation, they have given an explanation of the universe which appeared ridiculous to

us for a long time, but which our scholars are now beginning to accept." Thus Kapila, who lived in the 7th or 8th century B. C. and who is regarded as the father of all systematic philosophic and scientific thought in India, was a *Sadhu,* a man of renunciation and profound spiritual understanding. It was not merely by empirical research, but through long hours of deep meditation that he uncovered the secrets of the physical as well as of the metaphysical universe—facts which one by one are being verified by modern science. With a power of penetration derived from a perfectly concentrated mental vision, he perceived that the atomic theory could not be the last word of the physicist, that there were finer units of matter which he named "force-centres." And today we talk of electrons! Without caustic pencil and burning candle, he discovered that matter cannot be annihilated; that destruction is nothing but "reversion to the causal state"; that "the effect is only the cause reproduced"; that "something cannot come out of nothing"; "that the laws of nature are regular and uniform throughout." More than all, he anticipated Herbert Spencer in enunciating and developing the theory of evolution with such definiteness as to draw from Huxley the admission: "To say nothing of Hindu Sages to whom evolution was a familiar notion, ages before Paul of Tarsus was born."

Nor were he and his followers content, like Western evolutionists, to leave their theory at loose ends, carried only to the far boundary of the gross physical realm, with the whole of man's higher nature unaccounted for. It is the characteristic of the Hindu mind to push every theory to its ultimate conclusion, not to stop short of the furthest confines of individual consciousness. Having fol-

lowed the germ of life through its slow upward course from the protoplasmic cell to the human body, those great Aryan Seers found that only the first stage of its journey was completed; that, as Tyndall admitted at the close of his life, there lay beyond a vast unexplored region, where the laws of the lower realm,—struggle for existence, survival of the fittest—were reversed. Through that, too, the scientist must travel with the evolving germ, they said, if he would make his investigations complete. So they moved onward, and as they watched the unfoldment of the intellectual and then the spiritual consciousness and realized that, if it had taken eons to evolve a human body, how insufficient must one span of life be to evolve a soul, they gradually formulated the doctrines of Karma and Reincarnation, without which, Schopenhauer states, there can be no logical explanation of the universe. The first is merely the law of cause and effect applied not only to man's physical body, but to that subtler body of character which clothes the moral man; and the other is but the process of evolution extended to the whole of his nature and life.

Thus it was that in the Vedanta, religion and science rose from the same base,—the law of causation and evolution. And ever since they have stood firmly together as two inherent parts of one structure, never a house divided against itself. Conflict between religion and science is an unknown thing in India. As a great Hindu spiritual teacher once said to me: "The struggle for Truth on the outside is what we call science; the struggle for Truth on the inside is what we call religion." But since Truth is one, there can be no variance between them. Science is the foundation; religion is the superstructure; and philosophy is that which

binds the two together, which correlates the facts of both and unites them into a complete whole.

It is this quality of completeness, of inclusiveness, which characterizes all Indo-Aryan thought. Nothing is left hanging in mid-air, nothing is taken for granted, nothing is omitted. The Hindu truth-seeker in his researches realized that every fact in the universe must be accounted for. To leave out one was to render all science hypothetical. Yet to try to compass the whole realm of external phenomena was, he knew, an impossibility. Hence the only method was to pierce through phenomena to the Noumenon, to find that "knowing which all else would be known"; to leave untrammelled the diversity of nature and to penetrate to the unity behind. It was the determined effort of those ancient Vedic Rishis to find the point of unity in the midst of this infinite variety which led to their extreme subjectivity. They understood that all investigation must be concentric, that only in a Final Cause could all things meet; and seeking that, they mounted step by step the ladder of Abstract Truth until they attained heights of idealism such that Max Muller declares: "None of our philosophers, not excepting Heraclitus, Plato, Kant or Hegel, has ventured to erect such a spire, never frightened by storms or lightnings. Stone follows on stone, in regular succession after once the first step has been made, after once it has been clearly seen that in the beginning there can have been but One, as there will be but One in the end, whether we call it *Atman* or *Brahman*."

Yet they were not mere idealists, as it is too often claimed. Standing at a great distance, we see only the tallest pinnacle of any structure. So with the Vedic teaching. Looking back through the long vista of the ages, the ordinary observer

perceives the highest points of Indian philosophy only and characterizes it as pure speculative idealism. But those who draw closer, discover beneath those lofty towers of idealistic thought a solid edifice of science and reason. The facts of history bear this out. It is known today that all the sciences made great strides in ancient India and some of them point to it as their birth-place. The Greeks borrowed much of their "Materia Medica" from the Hindus. Chemistry with them was a well-developed science and it was from them, so Dr. Royle declares, that the Arabs learned the use of metals as internal remedies. The code of Manu stands as a model to the world of law, and Sanskrit grammar is acknowledged to be the most perfect grammar known. In mathematics the Hindus discovered geometry and the use of algebra in astronomical investigations and geometrical demonstrations. It was they who gave to the Arabs the Decimal Notation, which made Arithmetic for both East and West a practical science; and later on, their great astronomer, Ary-Bhatta (476 A. D.), who is called the Newton of India, proclaimed the law of gravitation and calculated the distance of the earth's circumference.

The ruins of astronomical observatories, the records of ancient laboratory and library, show that the Indo-Aryans did not disregard the value of the empirical method. On the contrary, no modern scientist has held to it with such rigid insistence; for they claimed that it was not enough to apply it merely to the realm of outer nature, it must be carried with equal precision into the realm of religion. Experience should be the criterion of higher forms of knowledge as well as lower. Every individual, in fact, should evolve his own religion by experiment and observation. In doing

this he could take as his guide any great teacher or Saviour, or he could go boldly on alone, testing the truth of their discoveries and revelations by his own. He must "prove all things" for himself, until the last theory has been merged into a demonstrated fact. Man must not be content to speculate concerning the existence of God, he must see and know Him. Mere belief in immortality will not do; while still in the body each one must find that in him which is deathless and identify himself with that, if he would become immortal. Every phenomenon of his inner being must be tried out in the crucible of experience, else for him there can be no true religion and no living God.

To make this possible was the great achievement of Patanjali, the successor of Kapila. He sought to develop in the field of psychology a scientific system of education by which man could gain full possession of that vast subjective realm beyond the reach of the senses. He saw that so long as the process of evolution was confined to the subconscious region, nature could work unhindered and carry the individual germ of life on its way in passive submission—like a child in its mother's arms. When, however, it rose to the realm of the conscious and became cognizant of itself, a self-conscious being, from that moment it must coöperate with nature, if it would hasten on its way to perfection. How this coöperation might best be accomplished was his chief study and out of it rose the science of Yoga. The word itself is the precursor of the English derivative from the Sanskrit "yoke" and signifies "joining" or "union"; and it was thus applied because the purpose of the science was to effect a union between man's lower and higher being. As nature, unaided, had borne the evolving soul from the subconscious or brute state

to the conscious or human; so man must now learn to bridge for himself the chasm lying between the human and the Divine or superconscious. This, he perceived, could be done, not by going against nature, but by working with her,—taking the same processes used by her on the lower plane and employing them on the higher level.

In the West religion has been too often represented as a conflict with nature, a "striving with the Lord." Not so in India. The science of Yoga or religious practice is a natural science; not because it leaves out of account the supernatural, but because in the Vedanta the horizon of the natural is stretched to such ultra-finite limits that beyond stands the Absolute alone. And since religion is the struggle of man to "rebind" himself to God, it necessarily lies within the realm of his finite perception. Therefore religious or superconscious development should be but the continuation of one unbroken system of education beginning with the body and culminating in the soul. Such was the system of Yoga. Through its different branches, —Hatha, Karma, Raja, Jnana and Bhakti—man was shown how he could unfold the latent powers of body, mind, intellect and heart and come into possession of his whole being. Nor are its methods any more occult or mysterious than are the principles of higher mathematics or the multiform manifestations of electricity. The play of nature's subtler forces must always seem mysterious to the unknowing mind. What will the simple villager think, who without acquaintance with the telephone suddenly hears the voice of a son one hundred miles away? Or who perchance catches out of the air the strains of orchestral music, as did the wireless operator in a coast station when he broke in on the current of a tel-electric organ? All things

function according to some law and the true scientist is he who takes account of every plane of nature, not of the sense world only.

So long as science adheres obstinately to the gross material realm, it must be content to see "through a glass darkly". At any moment a new set of phenomena may arise and overturn any one of its theories, as we so often witness. There is but one way for it to see "face to face", that is to stop dealing with effects and begin the study of causes. To do this the scientist must rise to the plane of perception where causal forces operate. There is in the microcosm a plane corresponding to each plane of the macrocosm. Every individual stands, as it were, like a longitudinal section of the whole; and as he rises from stratum to stratum of his own consciousness, he comes into spontaneous understanding of the laws of that stratum in the universe outside. The great Hindu Seers discovered this fact, and it was that which led them to their highly metaphysical development. Yet they did not at any time underrate the value or necessity of all the lower stages through which they had travelled. Max Muller in his "Three Lectures on the Vedanta Philosophy" says: "Nor was there in India any necessity for honest thinkers to screen their doctrines behind the name of Esoteric Religion. . . . . And what is even more creditable to the ancient believers and philosophers of India, they never, in the exalted position which was allowed to them on account of their superior knowledge and sanctity, looked down with disdain on those who had not yet risen to their own height. They recognized the previous stages of submissive studentship and active citizenship as essential steps towards the freedom which they themselves enjoyed; nay, they admitted no one to their companionship who had

not passed through these stages of passive obedience and practical usefulness,"—that is, who had not served his apprenticeship in the life of objective activity.

Everywhere in creation the physical and the metaphysical exist side by side; and the character of a civilization is determined by the preponderance of one or the other, although only in the balanced union of the two does it reach a great height. Indian development has always been preëminently metaphysical. In their unfaltering search for the Essence, the Soul of all things, the Hindus have sharpened both their outer and their inner faculties. Even their senses have become keener, so that, as their minds can discern subtle differences imperceptible to the blunter mind of the West, so their eyes perceive subtler beauties in nature; and it is said that there are nowhere in the world greater nature-lovers than the Hindus. Their ears too can detect finer intervals of sound, which has resulted in so elaborate a system of music that few in the West can grasp it. It was no doubt to satisfy their delicate power of hearing that they invented the violin; and so sensitive are they to harmony in all things that they have different kinds of music for different hours of the day and different seasons of the year, and a song sung out of its hour or season jars upon them like a harsh discord.

In the West, on the other hand, the physical has always predominated. The metaphysical has been relegated to the region of pure speculation. Idealism has been an exotic growth, whose roots have never struck deep into society. Yet this does not mean that the civilization of either East or West is inferior. Both physical and metaphysical are necessary to a complete development. If through

the cultivation of his subjective powers only and the consequent attainment of a concentrated inner vision, man can move from effects to causes and learn to apprehend the higher truths of nature; yet without test-tube and microscope he cannot hope to demonstrate and teach those truths to others who have not developed like power. Truth is revealed in the world of the metaphysical; it is made practical and universal in the world of the physical. Man perceives Truth by cultivating his metaphysical or spiritual sight; he shares it with his fellowmen by developing his physical resources. The subjective is always individual, the objective alone can become social. But the letter without the spirit killeth; so a well-constructed social and political organism without a true religious consciousness is a body without a soul. The stirring of religious interest throughout the West today shows that it is beginning to recognize this fact. And now as always will it be the province of the East, while learning lessons of material progress from the West, to point to the occidental world the way to a renewal of subjective or spiritual life.

REPORT OF THE VEDANTA MOVEMENT

The meetings of the Vedanta Centre of Boston will be resumed on September 8th with the usual Sunday Service and Lecture at 11 A. M. Through September only two meetings a week will be held,—the Sunday morning Service and the Tuesday evening class, which will be open to the public. Both will be conducted by Sister Devamata.

Swami Paramananda will not be in Boston until November. The interest aroused by his visit to Florence, Italy, was so great that he has been urged to return there for the autumn and deliver a course of lectures, as well as hold classes. During

the four weeks he spent there, he was invited to speak on several occasions and his exposition of the Vedanta teaching awakened so earnest a response in the hearts of some of his listeners that an effort was at once set on foot to form a branch Centre there. The Swami spent the month of August at an Ashrama or Peace Retreat recently established in the high mountains of Switzerland not far from San Moritz. A number of people interested in Oriental teaching had gathered in the vicinity and were so eager to profit by the Swami's presence among them that he consented to hold three meetings daily throughout his stay. An invitation to lecture at Stratford-on-Avon during the Shakespearian Festival had to be given up because of the various other demands on his time.

* * *

The last Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevasrama or Home of Service at Vrindavan has just reached us. It reads: "The record of the year gives unmistakable evidence of the great utility of the Institution. The rapid increase in the number of patients from 301 to 17,472 within the brief period of five years can leave no room for doubt that it has met a sore and urgent need." During the past year, as stated above, 17,472 cases received treatment. "The work of relief was carried on in a purely unsectarian spirit, and Hindus from the highest to the lowest castes, as also Mahommedans, Christians and people of other religious persuasions were served with equal care and attention." Vrindavan, being the home of Sri Krishna through the early years of His life, is an especially holy place of pilgrimage to the Hindus and at all seasons thousands of pilgrims are pouring in from the furthermost districts of India. Yet, although there were formerly many

temples where the pilgrims were fed gratuitously, there was no institution for the proper care of the sick until the Ramakrishna Mission established the present hospital in 1907. Their method of giving relief is this: "(1) Poverty-stricken patients are picked up by the workers of the Home from the road-sides and carefully tended in the Ashrama; and in cases of death the Ashrama at its own cost cremates or disposes of the dead bodies according to the religious belief of each patient. (2) Medicines and special food are carried to sick persons in their own homes. (3) Medicines are given free of charge to outdoor patients. (4) Zenana women are granted all possible help in cases of extreme poverty." The hospital long since outgrew its limited quarters and overflowed into the outhouses of certain temple-buildings offered for its use; but still it has no separate wards for contagious diseases and is forced in consequence to turn away many suffering poor. It is the earnest wish of the Mission and of those directly connected with the hospital to erect suitable buildings which will enable them to extend their work.

* * *

We have received two new books by Swami Abbedananda: one, a small daintily-bound volume containing a lecture on "Human Affection and Divine Love"; the other, one of three volumes to appear on "The Great Saviours of the World," being a series of lectures originally delivered before the Brooklyn Institute. As the Swami is a careful and widely-read scholar in religious history and philosophy, this new work will undoubtedly prove of value to the ever-increasing ranks of those who are devoting themselves to the comparative study of religions.

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OCTOBER 1912

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SERVICE WITH LECTURE

BY

SISTER DEVAMATA

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.

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SUBJECTS 1912

October 6th. *What is Religion?*
" *13th.* *Realization and Recognition*
" *20st.* *The Personal God and the Absolute*
" *27th.* *Discipline and Discipleship*

SUNDAY VESPER SERVICE, 5 P. M.

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✠

Tuesday, 8 p. m. Class for Regular Students.

Thursday, 4 p. m. Talks on the "Bhagavad-Gita." Open to all.

Wednesday, 3-5 p m. Sister Devamata will see those who desire to talk with her personally. At other times by appointment.

Daily 5 p. m. Short Devotional Service with Meditation.

Swami Paramananda will return in November and resume charge of the principal meetings.

The Centre issues a small monthly publication entitled "The Message of The East." Subscription $1.00 a year.

For use of the Library, Reading-room and for all information please enquire at the Centre or apply to the Secretary.

Telephone 1328-M Back Bay

THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. OCTOBER, 1912 No. 10

Wherever in this world there are pure minds and pure hearts, the Lord is sure to reveal Himself; for He is Purity itself. Purity is His name: purity in those who listen, purity in those who preach. A longing for the Lord's message is sure to awaken where the heart is pure, where the mind is pure; and the power to satisfy this longing is sure to come where the heart is pure, where the mind is pure. Purity is, as it were, the Lord's vehicle; for where purity is, there the Lord has come. . . .

We should never forget that our real object is to enshrine the Lord in the heart of every man in the world; for the real temple of the Lord is the human heart. There within each heart the ground has to be consecrated, for it has been defiled by worldly desires and pleasures. Then on that consecrated ground let the temple of Divine communion be raised and the overflowing supreme Bliss of the Lord reign where before the deceitful pleasures of the world disputed sway with one another. Infinite Bliss from within — that is the ideal. Let the devotee be flooded by this Bliss from within. Preaching is real only when this Bliss provides for its own preaching; for no man can preach this Bliss through his own efforts and devices. One devotee overflowing with this Divine inner Bliss is

worth a million dollars spent in ordinary propaganda. One real temple raised in a human heart is of more value than dozens of temples built outside. History proves that the latter deteriorate and in time crumble, but the first forms a lasting source of regeneration for man. The outer temple readily falls a prey to decay; the inner temple knows it not. So remember, brave souls, that our object is really to raise the Temple from within.

From a Letter of Swami Premananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

To Him fly for refuge with all thy heart; by His mercy shalt thou obtain the highest peace and the eternal resting-place. . .

On Me do thou fix thy heart, to Me be thou devoted, Me do thou worship, to Me do thou bow down, and to Me shalt thou attain; truly do I promise it unto thee, for thou art dear to Me. Giving up all religious forms, take thy refuge with Me alone. I shall free thee from all imperfections; grieve not. *Bhagavad-Gita.*

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. *Jesus the Christ.*

The beloved children of God renounce themselves, and hence they do right without effort, and mount up to the highest point of goodness; while he who will not let go of himself, but does right by labor and toil, will never reach the highest that he might. In other words: he whose works proceed from himself, does little good service to God;

while he who suffers himself to be guided by the Holy Spirit, does great works even in small actions.

John Tauler.

Where self is, Truth cannot be; yet when Truth comes, self will disappear. Therefore, let thy mind rest in the Truth; propagate the Truth; put thy whole will in it and let it spread. In the Truth thou shalt live forever. Self is death and Truth is life. The cleaving to self is a perpetual dying, while moving in the Truth is partaking of life everlasting. *Gospel of Buddha.*

Man may rest in the eternal fitness; he may abide in the everlasting. . . He may bring his nature to a condition of One; he may nourish his strength; he may harmonize his virtue, and so put himself into partnership with God.

Chuang Tzu.

And we may well strive to do His Will, for we came into this world for no other end. Alas! day by day we ask that His Will may be done, and yet when it comes to the doing, we find it so hard! We offer ourselves so often to God; we continually say, "Lord, I am Thine, I give Thee my heart"; and when He accepts it, we are such cowards. How dare we call ourselves His, if we cannot shape our will to His?

St. Francis de Sales.

Mother, my Divine Mother, I am the machine, Thou art the one who runs the machine; I am the room, Thou art the tenant; I am the sheath, Thou art the sword; I am the chariot, Thou art the charioteer; I do whatever Thou makest me to do; I speak as Thou makest me to speak; I behave as Thou makest me to behave; not I, not I, but Thou, but Thou. *Sri Ramakrishna.*

SELF-SURRENDER

Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda

By prayer alone can we hope to rid ourselves of egotism. But when we pray and still ego remains, is it because our prayers do not reach God? No; God hears even the feeblest cry of the heart, for He is everywhere; but He knows that we are not ready. Through constant, earnest praying, however, we gradually make ourselves ready. Could not God make us ready at once? Surely; but He is so infinitely loving, He does not wish to molest us. So long as He sees that we really want to rule ourselves, He does not come. Only when we have realized our own utter nothingness, when we feel ourselves more worthless than the dust there in the road, and we say to God: "I am absolutely incapable of ruling my own life. Please come and occupy the throne. I give everything over to Thee". Then God comes and the ego goes away.

We must not, however, bribe the mind. We must not merely pretend to be humble, like a man who is very meek before a great man but will lord it over the servant in his own house because there he is the master. We must literally feel that we are no better than the Pariah. Sri Ramakrishna felt this, so he could go and sweep the out-house of a Pariah. He could become the scavenger of a scavenger. Only into such a heart does the Lord come. But the feeling must be absolutely sincere — no fraud or bribery. Socrates knew his own worthlessness and that was what made him a wise man.

At present we have too much faith in our own powers. And so long as this remains, the ego will sit on the throne and God will wait until we ourselves drive it off. Now we only trust God partially. We think we can do many things better

ourselves. We may say, "God, please write this letter"; but all the time we believe that we can write it a little better than He, so we do not entrust it entirely to Him. When, however, we can give up everything to Him, then we shall see how well He will serve us; for He says that of such devotees He actually becomes the servant.

Then where is there any place for individual struggle? Individual struggle leads to self-surrender. Until that comes we have to struggle. My Master, Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that a man must keep on fanning so long as the breeze does not blow; but when that begins to blow, then a fan is no longer necessary. So a man must struggle until self-surrender comes to him. Arjuna asked the same question in the Gita:— "If surrender is better than action, then why do you push me on to this terrible action, in which I shall have to slay my Guru, my own grandfather and my relations?" And Sri Krishna replies: "You must work in order to learn that work is useless. If I tell you, you will not believe it. You must find it out for yourself."

Only when we learn this, do we give up. So long as we think that anything can be gained by individual effort, we keep on working. Mani Mallik, who used to come to Sri Ramakrishna, once told us how for years he struggled to make his chandelier business a success; but all his efforts ended in failure, until one day after a last desperate attempt, it seemed as if ruin must overtake him. Then he sat down and began to weep, saying: "Lord, if it is Thy will to ruin me, let it be so. I have done all I could; now I turn everything over to Thee. Do with me whatever Thou wilt." At almost that very hour affairs took a new turn and he became a prosperous merchant.

A man must give up everything to God; then only he thrives.

That all this human effort leads to nothing, we see plainly enough in the world. The same struggle has been going on from the beginning of creation and it has kept the world just where it is. It has not been able to lift it one inch. Why? Because the world rests on lust and greed; lust and greed rest on the ego; and all this struggle comes from the ego. Swami Vivekananda was perfectly right when he said: "Work never helps the world; it only helps the man himself." And how does it help him? By teaching him that it is utterly useless, that God is the only worker.

The man who can throw himself at the feet of the Lord, saying from his heart: "Oh Lord! all this is Thine. This body, mind and soul belong to Thee. Of myself I am helpless, I am nothing. Do Thou take me." Then at once the Lord says: "Very well. I take you. Your body, mind and soul are mine." Then He makes the hands, His hands; He makes the feet, His feet; He makes the tongue, His tongue; He eats through that mouth, He speaks through those lips, He thinks through that mind, He acts through those hands and feet, and that man becomes a living God.

But we must not have a hazy idea about God. Now we think that this wall is real, that that boy is real, but God is something vague and indistinct, far off above the clouds. This is altogether false. If there is anything hazy, anything vague, anything uncertain and precarious, it is we ourselves; and God is the only certain thing in the universe. Therefore, when we surrender ourselves to God, we must know that He is a real Being. If we place a picture or an image on our altar, we must not think of it as a picture or an image; we must

feel that God Himself is there. This we must clearly understand. Otherwise self-surrender will never be possible for us; and through self-surrender alone can we hope to reach God. The moment we can surrender ourselves completely, at that very moment humility will come, realization will come, God-vision will come.

The man who has realized God will never lack for anything. Does he need a coat? A coat will come to him. Does he need shoes? Shoes will come. Has he need of money? Money is sure to come. For that reason Christ said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven and all these things will be added unto you." This is literally true, and it has been verified by history. A carpenter, a cowherd boy, a poor shepherd lad in the deserts of Arabia, a mendicant, who cares for these? Yet they rule the world and have infinitely more name and fame and all that worldly men are striving for than any emperor. A man by working very hard may gain a little fame for himself; but how short a time it lasts! While these men, who gave up everything for the Lord and felt no other attraction than God, are honored and worshipped by the world; for is not even an emperor proud to say: "I am a Christian, a worshipper of Christ?"

All your anxieties and troubles spring from egotism. Surrender yourself completely and at once they will all disappear. Then a smile will always play on your lips, your face will be shining and your mind will be calm and peaceful.

GOD AS MOTHER

Extract from Lecture by Swami Paramananda

God is the goal of the universe. From Him we come into existence, on Him we rest, and to Him

we go back. He is the Ocean and we are the bubbles. In substance we are one and the same with the Lord; only in form do we find difference. He is "One without a second," but "sages call Him by different names." Some call Him Father, some Mother, others Master, or Lord, or Friend; but all worship the same Supreme Being, from whom the whole universe has come forth. These divers aspects of God are intended to help seekers after Truth to realize the nearness of their Ideal. It is difficult to worship God in abstract form. We need some definite relation through which to serve and realize Him; and out of this need of the soul have sprung the various relations through which man has sought to pour out his love to the Supreme.

A definite Ideal is necessary to bring out the true feeling of devotion in us. The manifestation of God can first be seen in pure beings, in saintly characters. Although He dwells equally in every heart; still the heart of the true devotee is the special place where the manifestation of Divinity can be found. Therefore, we can see Him first through those of His children who have realized Him. That is the reason why a great Saviour declared, "He who has seen the Son has seen the Father"; because the Son is the representative of the Father, and when we honor him, we honor the Father. Also the Son resigns his will and his little self absolutely to the Father; his mind is always fixed on the Lord, so he becomes the Lord. Therefore, in seeing Christ or Buddha we actually see God. . . .

If we would worship Him we must do so through some form. All, however, cannot love Him in the same form or approach Him in the same relation; because we have varying tendencies. Of all the

relations we know in the world, however, the relation of the mother with her child is the holiest and highest, as well as the most universal. The child's love and devotion naturally flows towards the mother, and so does the mother's love towards the child. To a little child there is none greater than the mother. He always knows that she will protect him from every danger and difficulty. How inexhaustible is the love of the earthly mother for her child! How self-sacrificing and unchanging it is! Consideration for herself is always secondary; her first thought is for her child. If so much love and protection is given us by our earthly mother, how much greater must be the love we receive when the Divine Mother becomes our real Mother and protects us from all evils. Fear then vanishes. Our Mother is the Mother of the whole universe, whom can we fear? She is the supreme goal of all, what else can we desire? To have found Her, that is the state of supreme bliss and freedom.

But if we are all the children of the Mother of the universe, if God is our real Mother, what makes us forget that Mother? What makes us unconscious of Her glory? Why can we not see Her? Because something comes between us and our Mother. A veil drops between us, and that veil is worldliness. This is the only thing that separates us from the Mother and makes us miserable. Overcome attachment to the world and at once the veil will be removed. As long as a child does not forget his mother, he is safe; but when he forgets her, and in the vanity of his heart begins to depend on his own limited powers, then he meets with difficulties on all sides.

If, however, God is our loving Mother, why does She not protect Her children of Her own accord? Why does She let Her children be de-

luded by the world? The answer is very simple. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: The mother is always mindful of her children; but when the children are busy with their toys and forget the mother, she goes about her household work, believing that they are happily at play and do not need her. When, however, they are tired of their toys and begin to cry for the mother, then she comes at once, leaving aside all other duties. Similarly, as long as we are busy with the world and find our joy in it, we forget our Divine Mother and do not call upon Her; but when through bitter experience we feel that these toys of the world cannot satisfy us, that everything here is false and momentary, then we remember our Mother, the Divine Mother of the universe. Then only do we weep for Her, and hearing our cry, She comes to us, takes us up in Her loving arms and tenderly soothes and comforts us.

She is the nearest of all. In fact, She dwells in the heart of each one of us; but so long as we identify ourselves with worldly things, we do not perceive Her and we suffer. When, however, we turn from these things and our hearts weep for the Mother, when the feeling rises that we cannot live without Her, then She comes. All are Her children, all are alike to Her, all are dear to Her; but only those who understand this and are able to hold what She gives, can enjoy Her mercy. When we forget our limitations and think only of Her, we become free from the evil effects of our wrong actions and attain to Her. She is the goal. With Her is our real home, and until we reach it we are not safe. She alone can protect and guide us; for without Her will not a single leaf can move. But when we go to Her and take refuge in Her arms, then we are safe from all danger and true peace comes to us.

REPORTS

The Sunday Service was resumed at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on September 8th, and the attendance steadily increased throughout the month. It was also excellent at the Tuesday evening Talks on the Bhagavad Gita. The keynote of all the lectures given was the need of finding the true Ideal and serving It with single-hearted love and devotion, if one would advance in the spiritual life or attain to that state of complete self-surrender which alone can bring peace and blessedness to the hungering soul. As the physician, it was said, in testing the sight, knows that so long as the eyes see two candle flames when in reality there is only one, the sight is defective and must be given a different focus; similarly, so long as man sees two, — himself and his Ideal, he may be sure that his spiritual vision is defective; for seeing two is error or ignorance, seeing one is knowledge. Only when the delusive flame of his little self has moved to the centre and lost itself in the one real flame of the Ideal, when he has disappeared and the Ideal alone is left shining in his mind and heart, only then can he know that his spiritual sight has become true.

From the first of October the Tuesday class will again be for the regular students only; the Talks on the Bhagavad Gita, open to all, will be changed back to the usual hour of 4 o'clock on Thursday afternoon; and the daily Vesper Service will begin.

The Swami will return to Boston about the middle of November and resume charge of the principal meetings.

* * *

Seven years ago a Ramakrishna Society (Anath Bhandar) was founded by a group of students in

the Bowbazar district of Calcutta. Its purpose was to assist the needy and distressed, and the young workers devised an ingenious method of raising funds or provisions without unduly taxing anyone. They distributed among the residents of the locality small vessels, into which each householder was asked to throw a handful of rice daily; and on Sunday morning the boys could be seen going from door to door gathering up the week's contributions, until they were often bending under the heavy burden of their well-filled sacks. This and the money which was not infrequently added, were used to maintain a small orphanage, a dozen aged widows and a few helpless families. Since then the Society has been steadily growing until it now counts a membership of 852, is receiving the support of the Government of Bengal, as well as the Corporation of Calcutta; and at the last Annual Meeting the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal presided.

* * *

Swami Paramananda returned to Florence on Sept. 1st, and on the 14th began a series of public lectures there. His subjects for September were: "India and Her Contribution to the Thought World", "The Secret of Work (Karma Yoga)" and "The True Spirit of Religion is Universal". The course will continue through October and the Swami will speak on "The Value of Concentration", "Immortality of the Soul", "Reincarnation and the Law of Karma", "Divine Love and Tolerance". A class for the study of the Bhagavad Gita is also being held every Thursday afternoon. An enthusiastic adherent of the new work writes: "Everything lends itself here to the peace and happiness of these wondrous days, the beautiful weather, the flowers, the calm of these Tuscan

hills". And in another letter we read: "Two days ago two Hindus called at the villa. They had arrived from Bombay the day before and, hearing that a Swami was here, they came at once to pay their respects to him. It was touching to see their joy when they saw him; and now that they have had his blessing, they feel that their undertaking will be successful. They are both painters and have come here to study at the *Belle Arti*. They will, of course, attend all the lectures, which will bring a special element of interest into the Assembly. This afternoon a Cappuccini monk has asked permission to visit the Swami; also a Canon (of the Cathedral) wants to come; so you see the interest in him is growing."

* * *

EXTRACT FROM ARTICLE PUBLISHED IN "L'ESSOR", LAUSANNE

(*Translated from the French of M. Alfred Millioud*)

Swami means "Master". Who is a Master? He "who has authority" over his people. Who has such authority? To this question responds the cry of the devout soul. All doubts are quieted, light has come, life at last seems happy. The Hindus, for whom life is wholly in religion, acclaim all the Masters of the universe as their Masters; and no one can account it a fault among them that they venerate and love more especially the Masters whom they have in their midst, who walk in their streets, or whom they seek in the peaceful monasteries hidden in the depths of their mountains or on the outskirts of their cities. One of these is Swami Paramananda ("Joy of God"), who having preached in America for several years past the good tidings of India, recently came to Europe in response to the invitation of friends,

and is at present the guest of a chalet at Gryon here on a mountain height of Switzerland. . . The chalet bears the name Excelsior and M. Pfaff (the host) heartily welcomes there all who desire to talk with the Hindu Master. . .

The Swami belongs to that long line of the brothers of Saint Francis whom the sacred, turgid waters of the Ganges produce in as great numbers as lotuses, and who from the Himalayas to the Seas, cherish the immemorial tradition of those who love and think in Unity. What Unity? That of the soul. It manifests itself as Intuition, establishes itself in us as Wisdom, and acts as Charity. It is a firm belief in the Infinite, before which disappear the boundary lines of all things, leaving only the fulness of one thing which is everywhere. He lives, that One, and that is why I live. Otherwise I could not and would not live. And as one of our number remarked, with the warm approval of the Swami, the Life which seems to take away our life, renders it infinitely broader and deeper. As a Hindu axiom runs: What does the drop of water lose when it becomes the sea? It acquires the consciousness of millions of drops of water.

If one would give a name to this philosophy essentially human, noble, universal, that sees only Life, Soul, Him everywhere; that thinks only synthetically; expresses itself preferably in metaphors; banishes doubt; unbinds the fetters of the spirit; sees God in the evil-doer and never evil in God; and in consequence attributes to man his own faults and their lessons; to things the inherent sanction of the good; to the course of destiny, both human and cosmic, the rhythm of an evolution ultimately beneficent; if one would name this flower of the human mind according to the place

of its birth, although it belongs to the whole earth, one would call it Vedanta, as do the Hindus, which means the end or goal of the Vedas, the Sacred Books, which are sacred because they proclaim Reason to the furthermost limits of her glorious and undefinable horizon line. . .

But renounce everything, the modern reader will exclaim! To renounce, the Swami replies, is to cast aside the custom that one has formed through one or another of the senses, through this or that habit, through this or that error. It is to leave one country of the soul to dwell in another, it is to make the best use of life. We renounce our bed in the morning and our thought at night; but the soul finds no renunciation in this, for never is the thought freer or happier than when the body has abandoned itself in sleep. As to that, we ordinary people of the world renounce every day that which we like; so the disciple in Vedanta, for the sake of his Master, renounces unceasingly, not merely through duty but through desire. The practice of discipline which has become a joy to the Master, that the disciple learns in the ardor of study, in devotion to higher commands, through mastery of himself, through simplicity of life, and purity of heart. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God". It is only after he has served during the required time, that, through obedience in little things, he learns obedience to the eternal laws. It is in the silence of meditation that he is taught; it is in the long hours when his heart is being formed that at last one day at a certain moment there breaks for him the dawn which never again will darken, and he experiences the calm, the surrender of himself to the ideal which is born in him for all time, and which will protect and lead him in all his ways.

His life henceforth is a classic life in the highest sense of the word; for his thought is based on discipline of character, hence it is sane and vigorous, closely bound by a familiar and powerful logic, which betrays itself in his words, his gests and his smile. No more sadness, no more false laughter, nothing boisterous, nothing gross, a gladness in living, a Franciscan joy. Henceforth his mode of expression is naturally firm, clear, supple, endowed with a large view of things and seeking always a deep meaning in them.

Such is the ideal of life which India offers to us, and she offers it to the man who toils as well as to the man who "seeks", in virtue of the sacred and absolutely universal tradition of the Masters, sacred because it conforms to the most secret laws of Reason. She offers it to the unlettered as well as to the educated; for the first is nearer the attainment of the ideal in the resignation of his soul and the maturity of his pain-laden heart, than is the second through his power of dialectic which he both uses and abuses. She offers it to all those who seek God, be it in lighting the sacrificial fire, be it in preaching on the market-place, be it in reading and studying in a cloister, be it in giving water to a pilgrim or shelter to a wayfarer.

Let him who does not desire it, no longer observe ritual. But it is none the less true that it was instituted by the saints of old to help men seek God, and that the prayer at dawn and at the twilight hour of evening remains sacred with all the rest; to dispense with it absolutely one must be able to say: "I and my Father are one". . .

And the end of all on this earth is "Peace to all beings" — the very words with which the Swami closes every discourse, whether at Gryon or in America.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. I. DECEMBER, 1912 No. 12

Divine Incarnation is not a question of theological speculation, it is a scientific fact. Creation implies duality—a never-ceasing play of light and darkness, cold and heat, good and evil, pleasure and pain. But through this duality there runs an equally inevitable triplicity, another play,—that of the three *Gunas* or states of matter: *Tamas, Rajas* and *Sattva;* dullness, activity, serenity; the state of sleeping, of dreaming and of waking; subconscious, conscious and superconscious; brute, human and divine. The manifestation of any one state presupposes the latent presence of the other two and their subsequent manifestation. The development of the subconscious and the conscious is the sure promise of the superconscious. The passage of the germ of life or the individual soul from brute to man is but the precursor of a further journey from man to God. Brute incarnation and human incarnation foreshadow divine incarnation and prove it inevitable, for it is the irresistible tendency of nature everywhere to complete herself. The tree lives to produce the seed, the seed to produce the tree; and so persistent is this effort that all things in the material universe seem to revolve in an endless succession or circle. This effort at completion or perfection lies at the bottom of all evolu-

tion and cannot fail to carry every conscious entity up from the animal to the human and from the human to the divine.

Vedanta, however, recognizes two kinds of Divine manifestation: one is that of the perfected soul, who through countless lives and forms at last transcends matter, and, realizing its oneness with the Ultimate Source of all things, attains the vision of universal Truth. These are the great Seers and prophets, the world-movers. Then at long intervals, when materialism has overpowered some race or people, there comes a direct descent of Godhead into matter. Instead of the gradual piercing of the Divine through the material by long processes of purification or evolution from lower forms, the Infinite embodies Himself immediately and "God becomes man." Such are the great Saviours, and their coming is marked by gigantic social and spiritual revolutions. They are not merely movers, but re-shapers of the world. They change the whole face of things and men find new birth wherever they pass.

Nor is it possible to limit the number of times that God may thus embody Himself, any more than one can limit the number of times that a mother may go to her different children to settle their quarrels or save them from danger. The belief in the possibility of innumerable Saviours must come with a deeper understanding of the infinite and omnipotent nature of God. It is the natural outcome of a highly developed spiritual consciousness. When, on the contrary, the racial or national consciousness is uppermost, then the tendency is to limit Divine Incarnation to the one Saviour of some special locality, race or epoch; while the rise of a strong individualism, resulting in the apotheosis of the social conscience, tends to destroy all belief in

God-embodiment and even the one Saviour is regarded merely as a "perfect man." The power, however, to truly recognize one Saviour implies the necessity to recognize all; for Divinity alone can perceive Divinity, and when the divine or super-consciousness is unfolded in any human being, then God will be visible to him everywhere, but most of all must He be seen there where He is so fully manifest as in all the great world-Saviours.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

The *Avatara* or Saviour is the messenger of God. He is like the viceroy of a mighty monarch. As, when there is some disturbance in a far-off province, the king sends his viceroy to quell it; so, whenever there is a decline of religion in any part of the world, God sends His *Avatara* there.

These *Avataras* (like Rama, Krishna, Buddha, Christ) stand in relation to the Absolute as the waves of the ocean to the ocean.

Sri Ramakrishna.

Fools, unaware of My Supreme State, as the great Lord of beings, disregard Me dwelling in human form.

Though I am unborn and of unchangeable nature, and though I am Lord of all beings, yet ruling over My own *Prakriti* (nature), I come into manifestation by My own *Maya* (mysterious power).

O Bharata, whenever there is decline of virtue and predominance of vice, then I embody Myself. For the protection of the good and the destruction of evil-doers, and for the re-establishment of *Dharma* (virtue and religion), I am born from age to age.

Bhagavad-Gita.

God became man, that I might become God.
Meister Eckhart.

Hold fast to the image of the most beautiful and exalted virtue, which must be worshipped not with crowns, but with sweat and blood. . . . If anyone saw that face (of a great soul), more lofty and splendid than any usually found among men, would he not stand in dumb wonder as before a God, and silently pray that it might be for his good to have seen it? Then, overcome by the inviting grace of the vision, he would kneel in prayer, and after long meditation, filled with wondering awe, he would break forth into Virgil's words: "Hail to thee, whoe'er thou art! O lighten thou our cares!" There is no one, I repeat, who would not be inflamed with love were it given him to gaze upon such an ideal. Now, indeed, much obscures our vision: but if we would only make our eyes pure and remove the veil that covers them, we should be able to behold virtue even though covered by the body, and clouded by poverty, lowliness and shame. We should see its loveliness even through the most sordid veils. *Seneca.*

To re-establish the *Dharma* (Religion) there come *Mahapurushas* (great teachers of humanity), suited to the needs of the times and society. Call them what you will, either *Mahapurushas* or *Avataras,* it matters little. They reveal, each in his life, the Ideal. Then, by and by, shapes are moulded in their matrices—MEN are made! Gradually, sects arise and spread. As time goes on, these sects degenerate, and similar re-formers come again—this has been the law, flowing in uninterrupted succession, like a current, down the ages.
Swami Vivekananda.

SOME CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES OF DIVINE INCARNATION.

Class Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

God is infinite and He is absolutely one, unlimited and secondless. Then why should He incarnate? Why should He confine Himself in a form which is limited, when He is limitless? This human body is a peculiar thing. It seems to be only three and a half cubits in length, but it is really unlimited. For what is a living body? It is a conscious entity. Without consciousness, the body is as dull and dead as any inanimate object. It is consciousness alone which brings worth to it. Otherwise it is absolutely worthless and we throw it away. Therefore a living body means not only a body, but consciousness as well.

Now this consciousness, which shines through your five organs of sense, which shines through your five organs of action, which shines through yourself, is inside the body not outside. If you put a knife into your body, you feel pain; if you put the knife outside, you do not feel it. Nor is this consciousness ever absent. Everyone imagines that he is unconscious when he is sleeping; but this is not a fact. If a man is waking, you see he is conscious; in dream he is also conscious. When, however, he sleeps soundly, you think he is unconscious; but he is not. If you can remember a thing, you must have been conscious of it when you experienced it. Memory always means that you have consciously experienced something. If then, when you wake up, you remember that you have been in sound sleep, that means that in some way you were conscious of sleeping. That you are able to recall the experience of sleep shows that there was consciousness at that time. When a man experiences the absence of all sensations and perceptions, that is

what we call sleep; yet he is conscious. But he is not outside his body. In the three conditions of sleep, dream and waking, man is always inside the body. And in all three, consciousness is intact. From birth to death it is always there in the living man. During sleep mind is not there, senses are not there. If a man takes your book away at that time, you do not know it; if someone sings a song you especially like, you do not hear it; yet somewhere you are conscious.

Throughout the whole life-time of man, consciousness never ceases to be there. Mind does not always exist for him, senses do not always exist, body does not always exist, but consciousness always exists. It is consciousness that enlivens the senses and mind. It is consciousness which enables the senses to perceive all things. It is consciousness which enables the mind to think. Now this consciousness, which is distinct and separate from both mind and senses, has the power not to be confined by the mind, or the senses, or the body. When the consciousness is not confined by these, it is in its liberated condition and transcends all limitations. The consciousness is therefore really limitless. We can make this out in sound sleep; for at that time consciousness is unconfined, infinite. But where does it exist? Inside the body, never outside. The moment it goes outside, man drops down dead.

Now, consciousness being infinite and unlimited, and also being an essential part of man, man must be finite and infinite at the same time. He is finite as regards his body, he is finite as regards his mind, he is finite as regards his ego, but he is infinite as regards his consciousness. If it is thus possible for him to be finite and infinite at the same time, how much more must it be possible for

God! There is, however, this difference between man and God. Man has forgotten his infinite nature. He thinks he must have a certain amount of food, a certain amount of air, a certain amount of heat, to live. In his mind he is also limited by many doubts and anxieties; although we have to admit that one who lives in his mind has expanded himself infinitely more than the one who lives solely in his body. But what is the number of the last? At least ninety-nine per cent of humanity. The great majority of men believe that they are strong or weak, hungry or well-fed, rich or poor. But suppose there is a poet or a philosopher. He shuts himself up in a room, becomes so lost in thought that he forgets his body, forgets his little self, and begins to live in his higher consciousness. He is at once honored and respected by all men, because they see that he is much wiser than they, and it is at the feet of such that we go to sit and learn. Yet compared to infinite knowledge, what this man knows is infinitesimally small. But nearly every man imagines that he is three and a half cubits long; that at the death of the body he must die; and because he wants to live, he fears death.

This, however, is not the case with one who lives more in his consciousness and such a one is known as an Incarnation of God. Man identifies himself with his body and mind; he believes himself finite and thinks his consciousness limited; while an Incarnation of God identifies Himself with His consciousness and therefore knows Himself to be unlimited. That is the reason why, when Arjuna said to Sri Krishna: "You are of my ag and yet you say that you know that which happened before I was born," the Lord Sri Krishna replied: "Because you confine your consciousness by

your body and by your mind, therefore you know few things, you do not know about the whole of past time. You only know what has taken place in this life. Because you identify yourself with this body and mind, therefore your extension is limited and your life is limited. But I have identified Myself with consciousness; hence My extension is unlimited and My life is unlimited and I can know all time."

The Incarnation of God has the power to separate Himself from body and mind consciously and He does it from His birth. Suppose you consciously separate yourself from your shirt, you know it. But suppose during sleep someone takes it from your body, you do not know it. In the same way, when you are asleep, someone takes from you your body, your memory, your senses, and you cannot help it. The power which has forced you to lose your consciousness, has mastery over you; and that power is sleep. But sleep never overpowers an Incarnation of God. He is always wide awake. Therefore He is complete master of all His being. He has mastery over His body when He is awake. He has mastery over His mind when He is dreaming. He has mastery over His consciousness in sound sleep. Thus He is always the master. He is master of the waking state, He is master of the dream state and He is master of the state of sound sleep. He sleeps only when He wills. We often try to keep awake and yet we fall asleep; but that is not the case with a Divine Incarnation. Hence one of His names is *Gudakesa*, Lord of Sleep.

As in you, infinite consciousness is enlightening your body and mind; so in the tiniest animalcule, that same consciousness enlightens its body and mind. Behind both is infinite consciousness. Just as there may be a very small creek, yet it is filled from

the big ocean; so all these finite consciousnesses are filled from the infinite ocean of Consciousness. Therefore from the highest being, Brahma, down to the lowest blade of grass, all living organisms are a peculiar mixture of that which is finite and that which is infinite. If then every organism is a mixture of finite and infinite, when God incarnates, He, too, becomes both finite and infinite. But He only appears finite. He never really identifies Himself with His finite manifestation. Man thinks himself finite, so his body is finite, his mind is finite, even his consciousness seems to be finite. But because the Incarnation of God never identifies Himself with His body and mind, although He appears finite, He is all the time really infinite. Though He seems to be finite in power, He is actually omnipotent. Therefore Sri Krishna says to Arjuna: "Because men cannot recognize my infinite nature, they treat me as an ordinary human being. But I am always infinite, although I may appear finite." This is the difference between an Incarnation of God and ordinary created beings of this universe: man is consciously finite and unconsciously infinite; an Incarnation of God is consciously infinite and unconsciously finite.

There are also certain marks which distinguish a Divine Incarnation from a *Mukta-purusha* or a *Siddha-purusha* (a liberated or perfected soul). There are four kinds of *Siddha-purushas*:

Some men by sitting at the feet of a true teacher, by seeing him, watching his life, following his teaching, serving him, worshipping him, finally realize their own perfect nature. Such are called *Sadhana-Siddhas*. Then there are those who become perfect through dream-inspiration. In a dream they see some great soul who gives them a *mantram* or sacred word; they remember this when

they wake up and by repeating it become perfect. These are *Swapna-Siddhas*. The *Kripa-Siddhas* attain perfection through the mercy of a Great Soul. And *Nitya-Siddhas* are those who are ever perfect. My Master, Sri Ramakrishna, used to say that as a gourd or pumpkin-vine brings forth first the fruit and then the flower, so these ever-perfect souls are already born *Siddhas*, or perfect, and all their apparent efforts to attain perfection are only to set an example to mankind. They are really born with wisdom and this wisdom helps them to distinguish right from wrong, good from evil, gain from loss, and thus from the beginning being able to know what is right, what is good, what is real profit, they begin to struggle for these things and through this struggle they manifest their perfect nature.

There are certain *Nitya-Siddhas* who incarnate with God. They are, as it were, the courtiers of God, the companions of God. They are constantly with God, so they must be perfect; and when God is born in a body, they come with Him. But you can easily make out that they are different from the Incarnation of God, because they always sit at the feet of the Incarnation, and never claim to be equal to their Master. An Incarnation of God is always perfect. He seems to be a peculiar mixture of weakness and strength, of that which is absolutely finite and that which is absolutely infinite; but He is always conscious of His perfect and infinite nature.

There is another thing which distinguishes an Incarnation. With the ordinary man, if he wants to learn, he must go and sit at the feet of someone who knows; but Divine Incarnations never really need a teacher. They never have a Guru. They get all the illumination from within themselves.

Illumination comes to them by the coöperation of their body and mind with their infinite consciousness. Man analyzes the world, studies its various parts, tries to understand its phenomena. The Incarnation does not care to analyze the world in this way. Nor does He worship as others do. He comes to teach a new and purer form of religion—to teach men how to worship in a truer way, so how can He comply with the manners of those around Him? How can He move like them, live like them, worship like them? For that reason people criticize Him, or even persecute and kill Him. He comes as a teacher and not as one who is taught by the ordinary methods of the world. Most men must read books, most men must go to school; but without reading books, without going to school, He is able to know everything; and those who read books and go to school, compared to Him, really know nothing. We saw it in the case of our great Master, Sri Ramakrishna. An Incarnation cannot teach that if a man wants to realize his infinite nature, his all-knowing nature, he must study books and have a college education. No; He says rather: "You must not read books. You must go within and read the book of your own nature; then only will you realize perfection." But if we should not send our children to school, and did not have them study books, people would think us mad. Because we are ordinary human beings, bound by society and must follow its laws. But the Incarnation is absolutely independent. He looks to no one. So at first people think Him insane. When, however, they come to realize His greatness, then they go and sit at His feet to learn.

Some Incarnations, of course, are not appreciated during their life-time. Christ was not. People even thought Him a wicked, dangerous man and

crucified Him. Yet today He is worshipped by how many people in the world. So it sometimes happens with Divine Incarnations; although this is not so much the case in India. Every Incarnation, however, has His friends and His enemies, but the friends far outnumber the enemies.

What is a Saviour? You have a heavy burden on your back and someone comes and says: "My dear fellow, here let me have it." He cannot bear to see you paining and so he takes the load. "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest." That is a Saviour. Christ was truly such a Saviour. These great ones do not die. They are still living and if anyone cries earnestly to them now: "Come to me, lift my load of misery"; they are sure to come, for they are universal helpers of humanity.

A PRAYER

Oh, Thou great Spirit, Love Infinite and All-pervading, the only Reality, in which we live and move and have our being, keep me pure and white and worthy, an open channel for Thyself to fill and move and use!

Forgetting self,
To know the All,
Lost to externals,
Feeling only Thee,
Grant us Thy peace
To follow every fall,
Vibrant with love,
Pervading ecstasy.

Deaf to the world,
Our ears attuned to hear
The music of the Silence
Where Truth alone can speak,
Bereft of thought,
That misinterprets oft,
Give us Thy strength
When we alone are weak.

If in the daily strife
To realize the best
We fail and fall
And cry aloud from pain,
Grant us to know
That stillness of the heart
When tears are over
And the quiet comes again.

Expecting nothing,
(If we reach that height)
Free from regret,
From disappointment free,
Asking from others,
Not more than from ourselves,
Losing ourselves at last
To live in Thee.

So shall the soul
To greater heights ascend,
Feeling not knowing,
At one with Truth and Love,
Giving not getting,
Asking no return,
Content to work and worship
And wait the law to prove.

REPORTS

The new hospital established by the Ramakrishna Mission at Muthigunj, Allahabad, has recently published its initial report, covering the first fifteen months of its work. Through the energetic guidance of Swami Vijnananda, the *Sevashram* has, during this short period, already brought relief to 5292 patients. Situated in a holy city like Prayag, where Hindu pilgrims flock by hundreds of thousands, the hospital has a wide field of possible usefulness and will undoubtedly grow rapidly if given proper support by the public.

At Vrindavan the hospital of the Mission, according to its last annual report recently received, has treated 4792 cases during the 12 months under review, besides helping other patients in their own homes.

At Rangoon, a member of the Ramakrishna Sevaka Society, devoted to philanthropic service, recently succumbed to the pneumonic plague, while nursing a plague patient. Two young men, who were assisting him, also caught the infection and died. Such examples of truly heroic service are not uncommon among the followers of the Ramakrishna Mission, whose policy is to send workers wherever there is plague, flood or famine.

* * *

Swami Bodhananda has assumed charge of the Vedanta Society of New York and is giving a lecture at the Society House, 135 West 80th Street, every Sunday at 3 o'clock, and holding classes on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

* * *

At the Vedanta Society of San Francisco Swami Trigunatitananda and Swami Prakashananda are carrying out the following active programme: Three meetings every Sunday; Lectures on the

Gita and the Vedas on Monday and Thursday, and a Meditation Class every morning at ten.

* * *

Swami Paramananda, head of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, returned to Boston on November 19th, after nearly six months of uninterrupted teaching in Europe. His first classes were held in Germany. He next went to Florence to visit friends there, but soon after his arrival he was asked to give some lectures on Vedanta, which awakened so much interest that he was urged to make his headquarters there. He had, however, promised to spend August at Gryon in Switzerland, where a Peace Retreat has been established by some earnest truth-seekers. During the month there he held a regular meeting and two meditation classes daily, besides receiving many visitors, people coming from Geneva, Lausanne and other nearby places to see him. Among them were some who did not understand English and could not therefore follow the lectures, but who were nonetheless regular attendants, because they declared that they felt the blessing of just sitting in the Swami's presence. Some of the most devoted followers were little children, who daily climbed the mountainside to bring offerings to the Swami; and one of them so loved the chanting of the Scriptures that one day she said: "Please ask Swami always to talk in Sanskrit. It is so beautiful." An Italian Review publishes the following account of this period:

"The Swami Paramananda has just closed a four weeks' visit at Gryon. Every afternoon while there he gave a lecture. More than fifty people came to hear him. He has left behind him the impression of a man of profound knowledge in the domain which is peculiarly his own,—that of the soul. He impressed us above all by his great spirit-

uality, by his deep realization of that which transcends the human senses, of that which is beyond action, speech and human thought. In his spirituality he is a saint; in his knowledge, a scholar; in his humility, a child. He possesses simplicity joined to great wisdom and overflowing kindness. One feels one's self in the presence of something which goes beyond ordinary comprehension and which one desires to possess or realize. India has sent us one of her best Masters; it rests with us to accept the message of the East and to extend a brotherly and grateful hand to this one who comes to us like a message of love."

On the first of September the Swami returned to Florence and on the fourteenth began a course of eight lectures given on successive Saturdays, with a Gita Class on Thursday. Despite the fact that it was out of season, the attendance far exceeded what was expected, sometimes going beyond a hundred; while at the Gita Class there were always between thirty and forty. There was also a large demand for books on Vedanta. Besides these public meetings the Swami held a Children's Service every Sunday afternoon at 5, to which grown people also begged to come. It was with the greatest reluctance that the Swami was permitted to leave Florence. Some of those who had followed his teaching at Gryon were writing him urgent letters to come to Paris for at least a short course of classes and lectures; but the Swami felt it necessary to return to Boston and sailed from Naples on November 6th. He will probably remain at the Boston Centre for the rest of the winter, conducting the Service with Lecture on Sunday morning at 11, and the Tuesday Evening Yoga Class for the regular students, besides giving a special course of Talks on the Upanishads on Thursday afternoon at 4. The daily Vesper Service will continue as usual.

SPECIAL NOTICE

With this number the first volume of "The Message of the East" is completed and we feel much gratified by the expressions of sincere appreciation which we have received from many quarters. This encourages us to set out on another year and we hope that all who have found the publication helpful, will co-operate with us in trying to make it known to their friends.

We would also request all our subscribers to send their new subscriptions promptly.

Those who desire to procure back numbers may do so by applying to the Editor. A limited number of bound copies of Volume I. will also be put on sale.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. JANUARY, 1913 No. 1

To discover the cause of misery and remove it has led man to the conquest of external nature and to the mastery of his own inner nature. And what has been found to be the cause of misery? Ignorance. And what is the cause of ignorance? The wise men or Seers of Truth, who have realized their true Self, or soul, all declare that the ignorance of man consists in his self-deluding egotism, or in the identification of this body, which is changeable, with the immutable Self. This is what constitutes the veil, the bondage or illusion. It is this which prevents us from having the vision of our true Self, which is immortal, pure, spotless and everlasting. We identify ourselves with that which passes or changes, instead of with that which changes not; and this dwelling upon the transitory manifestation, upon the "I" and "mine," is what is called self-deluding egotism, which comes from the darkness of ignorance or the veil of illusion covering our minds. The soul is immutable and eternal. No change of condition can make it happy or miserable. "It has no birth, it has no death, it is everlasting; our body may perish but that does not affect it in the least." Is it not, therefore, a great mistake to identify the body, which has beginning and end and which is subject to disease and death, with that ever-free soul?

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

The five elements make up the gross body. The subtle body is made up of the *manas* (ruler of the senses), the *buddhi* (determinative faculty), *ahamkara* (egoism or the sense of "I") and the *chitta* (feelings). The inner body which feeleth the joy of the Lord is called the "Body of Ecstasy," or the *Karana-sarira*. Beyond all there is the *Mahakarana*, the Great First Cause—the Unconditioned—which cannot be expressed by words.

God, the Unconditioned Spirit, they (the sages of old) saw by means of the Purified Mind, which they found to be the same as the *Atman* or the Unconditioned Soul within.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

But thus conceive it, then; that every living body doth consist of soul and matter. . . . For that all living bodies are ensouled; whereas, upon the other hand, those that live not, are matter by itself. And in like fashion soul when in itself is, after its own maker, cause of life; but the cause of all life is He who makes the things that cannot die.

Hermes Trismegistos.

This (Self or soul) is never born, nor does it die, nor after once having been, does it go into non-being. This (soul) is unborn, eternal, changeless, ancient. It is never destroyed even when the body is destroyed.

Sword cannot pierce it, fire cannot burn it, water cannot wet it and air cannot dry it.

It cannot be pierced, nor burned, nor wet, nor dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, everlasting.

Bhagavad-Gita.

The ancients spoke of death as of God cutting down a man suspended in the air. The fuel is consumed, but the fire may be transmitted and we know not that it comes to an end. . . . Life and Death are all-powerful, but they cannot affect *it*. Heaven and earth may collapse, but *that* will remain. If *this* is found to be without flaw, it will not share the fate of all things. It can cause other things to change, while preserving its own constitution intact. *Chuang-Tzu.*

Then beyond question, the soul is immortal and imperishable, and our souls will truly exist in another world! . . . But now, as the soul plainly appears to be immortal, there is no release or salvation from evil except in attainment of the highest virtue and wisdom.

And what is purification but the separation of the soul from the body; the habit of the soul gathering and collecting herself into herself, out of all the courses of the body, the dwelling in her own place alone, as in another life, so also in this, as far as she can; the release of the soul from the chains of the body? *Plato.*

In every feast remember that there are two guests to be entertained, the body and the soul; and that what you give the body you presently lose, but what you give the soul remains forever.

Epictetus.

Now the power of sight of the souls of the many and unrighteous is ever shut in, since it lies dead in deep sleep, and can never respond and be made awake to the things of nature and the types and ideas within her. But the spiritual eyes of the wise man are awake, and behold them; nay they are sleeplessly alert, ever watchful from desire of seeing. *Philo of Alexandria.*

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL AND ITS GOAL

Unpublished Lecture by Swami Vivekananda.

The earliest idea is that a man, when he dies, is not annihilated. Something lives and goes on living even after the man is dead. Perhaps it would be better to compare the three most ancient nations, the Egyptians, the Babylonians, and the ancient Hindus, and take this idea from all of them. With the Egyptians and the Babylonians we find a sort of soul idea,—that of a double. Inside this body, according to them, there is another body which is moving and working here; and when the outer body dies, the double gets out and lives on for a certain length of time; but the life of the double is limited by the preservation of the outer body. If the body which the double has left is injured in any part, the double is sure to be injured in that part. That is why we find among the ancient Egyptians such solicitude to preserve the dead body of a person by embalming, building pyramids, etc. We find both with the Babylonians and the ancient Egyptians, that this double cannot live on through eternity; it can, at best, live on for a certain time only, that is just so long as the body it has left can be preserved.

The next peculiarity is that there is an element of fear connected with this double. It is always unhappy and miserable; its state of existence is one of extreme pain. It is again and again coming back to those that are living, asking for food and drink and enjoyments that it can no more have. It is wanting to drink of the waters of the Nile, the fresh waters which it can no more drink. It wants to get back those foods it used to enjoy while in this life; and when it finds it cannot get them, the double becomes fierce, sometimes threatening the living with death and disaster if it is not supplied with such food.

Coming to Aryan thought, we at once find a very wide departure. There is still the double idea there, but it has become a sort of spiritual body; and one great difference is that the life of this spiritual body, the soul, or whatever you may call it, is not limited by the body it has left. On the contrary, it has obtained freedom from this body, and hence the peculiar Aryan custom of burning the dead. They want to get rid of the body which the person has left; while the Egyptian wants to preserve it by burying, embalming and building pyramids. Apart from the most primitive system of doing away with the dead, amongst nations advanced to a certain extent the method of doing away with the bodies of the dead is a great indication of their idea of the soul. Wherever we find the idea of a departed soul closely connected with the idea of the dead body, we always find the tendency to preserve the body, and we also find burying in some form or other. On the other hand, with those in whom the idea has developed that the soul is a separate entity from the body and will not be hurt if the dead body is even destroyed, burning is always the process recurred to. Thus we find among all ancient Aryan races burning of the dead; although the Parsees changed it to exposing the body on a tower. But the very name of the tower means a burning place, showing that in ancient times they also used to burn their bodies. The other peculiarity is that among the Aryans there was no element of fear with these doubles. They are not coming down to ask for food or help; and when denied that help, they do not become ferocious, or try to destroy those that are living. They rather are joyful, are glad at getting free. The fire of the funeral pyre is

the symbol of disintegration. The symbol is asked to take the departed soul gently up, and to carry it to the place where the fathers live, where there is no sorrow, where there is joy forever, and so on.

Of these two ideas we see at once that they are of a similar nature: the one optimistic and the other pessimistic, being the elementary. The one is the evolution of the other. It is quite possible that the Aryans themselves had, or may have had, in very ancient times exactly the same idea as the Egyptians. In studying their most ancient records, we find the possibility of this very idea. But it is quite a bright thing, something bright. When a man dies, this soul goes to live with the fathers and lives there enjoying their happiness. These fathers receive it with great kindness; this is the most ancient idea in India of a soul. Later on this idea becomes higher and higher. Then it was found out that what they called the soul before was not really the soul. This bright body, fine body, however fine it might be, was a body after all; and all bodies must be made up of materials, either gross or fine. Whatever had form or shape must be limited, and could not be eternal. Change is inherent in every form. How could that which is changeful be eternal? So, behind this bright body, as it were, they found something which was the soul of man. It was called the Atman, the Self. This Self idea then began. It had also to undergo various changes. By some it was thought that this Self was eternal; that it was very minute, almost as minute as an atom; that it lived in a certain part of the body, and when a man died his Self went away, taking along with it the bright body. There were other people who denied the atomic nature of the soul on the same ground on which they had denied that this bright body was the soul.

Out of all these various opinions rose Sankhya philosophy, where at once we find immense differences. The idea there is that man has first this gross body; behind the gross body is the fine body, which is the vehicle of the mind, as it were; and behind even that is the Self, the Perceiver, as the Sankhyas call it, of the mind; and this is omnipresent. That is, your soul, and my soul, and everyone's soul, is everywhere at the same time. If it is formless, how can it be said to occupy space? Every thing that occupies space has form. The formless can only be infinite. So, each soul is everywhere. The second theory put forward is still more startling. They all saw in ancient times that human beings are progressive, at least many of them. They grow in purity and power and knowledge; and the question was asked, whence was this knowledge, this purity, this strength, which men manifested. Here is a baby without any knowledge. This baby grows and becomes a strong, powerful and wise man. Whence did that baby get its wealth of knowledge and power? The answer was that it was in the soul; the soul of the baby had this knowledge and power from the very beginning. This power, this purity, this strength were in that soul, but they were unmanifested; they have become manifested. What is meant by this manifestation or unmanifestation? That each soul is pure and perfect, omnipotent and omniscient, as they say in the Sankhya; but it can manifest itself externally only according to the mind it has got. The mind is, as it were, the reflecting mirror of the soul. My mind reflects to a certain extent the powers of my soul; so your soul, and so everyone's. That mirror which is clearer reflects the soul better. So the manifestation varies according to the mind one possesses; but the souls

in themselves are pure and perfect. There was another school who thought that this could not be. Though souls are pure and perfect by their nature, this purity and perfection become, as they say, contracted at times, and expanded at other times. There are certain actions and certain thoughts which, as it were, contract the nature of the soul; and then also other thoughts and acts which bring its nature out, manifest it. This again is explained. All thoughts and actions that make the power and purity of the soul get contracted are evil actions, evil thoughts; and all those thoughts and actions which make the soul manifest itself, make the powers come out, as it were, are good and moral actions. The difference between the two theories is very slight; it is more or less a play on the words expansion and contraction. The one that holds that the variation only depends on the mind the soul has got, is the better explanation, no doubt, but the contracting and expanding theory wants to take refuge behind the two words; and they should be asked what is meant by contraction of soul, or expansion. Soul is a spirit. You can question what is meant by contraction or expansion with regard to material, whether gross which we call matter, or fine, the mind; but beyond that, if it is not matter, that which is not bound by space or by time, how to explain the words contraction and expansion with regard to that? So it seems that this theory which holds that the soul is pure and perfect all the time, only its nature is more reflected in some minds than in others, is the best. As the mind changes, its character grows, as it were, more and more clear and gives a better reflection of the soul. Thus it goes on, until the mind has become so purified that it reflects fully the quality of the soul; then the soul becomes liberated.

This is the nature of the soul. What is the goal? The goal of the soul among all the different sects in India seems to be the same. There is one idea with all, and that is liberation. Man is infinite, and this limitation in which he exists now is not his nature. But through these limitations he is struggling upward and forward until he reaches the infinite, the unlimited, his birthright, his nature. All these combinations and recombinations and manifestations that we see round us, are not the aim or the goal, but merely in the way and passing. These combinations as earths and suns and moons, stars, right and wrong, good and bad, our laughter and our tears, our joys and sorrows, are to enable us to gain experience through which the soul manifests its perfect nature and throws off limitation. No more, then, is it bound by laws either of internal or external nature. It has gone beyond all law, beyond all limitation, beyond all nature. Nature has come under the control of the soul, not the soul under the control of nature, as it thinks it is now. That is the one goal that the soul has; and all the succeeding steps through which it is manfesting, all the successive experiences through which it is passing in order to attain to that goal,—freedom, are represented as its births. The soul is, as it were, taking up a lower body and trying to express itself through that. It finds that to be insufficient, throws it aside and a higher one is taken up. Through that it struggles to express itself. That also is found to be insufficient, is rejected, and a higher one comes, so on and on until a body is found through which the soul manifests its highest aspirations. Then the soul becomes free.

(Concluded in next number.)

ISA-UPANISHAD

(Knowledge of the Supreme Lord and of the Self.)

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda.

The special characteristic of the Upanishads is that they all begin with a Shanti-patha or Peace Verse. The idea is that we cannot comprehend any of the subtler problems of life until our mind is tranquil; so the first thing necessary is to unite our mind, our forces and our ambitions into one whole. They must be made one-pointed.

PEACE VERSE

OM! That (the Invisible-Absolute) is whole; whole also is this (the visible phenomenal); from the (Invisible) Whole comes forth the (visible) whole. If the whole be taken from the Whole, still the Whole remains. OM! Peace. Peace. Peace.

"That" is often used in the Upanishads to define the Invisible-Absolute, because it can never be fully defined by any word or words. Any finite thing like a table can be defined, but God who is whole and without limitations cannot be limited by our thoughts. Finite language can never express the Infinite. Therefore the Sages, whatever they have thought, have always been careful not to try to limit the Infinite, but have chosen the indefinite term "That" to designate the Absolute. This visible universe comes forth from That Invisible, Unlimited and Indestructable Whole; hence it must bear the same nature as its origin. Therefore the wise man sees no difference between "That" (the Invisible) and this (the visible).

"If the visible whole is taken from the Invisible Whole, the Whole only remains." This means: let not man have any broken understanding; let him

always fill finite things with the Infinite Whole. Then there can be nothing small or insignificant for him. Seeing that One in everything and that One Being everywhere, nothing can be regarded as small. And since the visible comes out of that Invisible, nothing should be regarded as evil. All things visible and invisible are to be known through Self-knowledge.

I

All this, whatsoever moves on the earth, should be covered by the Lord (Self). Having renounced (the unreal), enjoy. Do not covet any man's wealth.

No matter what we perceive, from the minutest to the biggest, all that moves on this earth must be taken as coming from That, the Supreme. When the consciousness is firmly fixed in God, the source of all external phenomena, then the conception of duality naturally drops away, because He shines through all. Thus having renounced the idea of duality, that is, having a true recognition of the One out of which the many come, and rising above all conceptions based on ignorance, then alone we may truly enjoy. There are two ways of renouncing: one is to surrender yourself wholly to the Supreme Self and let that Self be the ruling principle in all that you do; the other is to see the One in everything and thus transcend the idea of duality or separateness. When you have thus renounced by either of these means, you enjoy what? You enjoy this life, because you see it from another point of view. If you do not have knowledge of the Self, you cannot be happy; because at any moment the things you depend on for your happiness may be taken away, since nothing on this plane of duality or of external phenomena is permanent

or stable. But the Self never changes or perishes; therefore one who has knowledge of the Self, never being separated from God in his consciousness, he alone is truly able to enjoy life.

As long as you hold yourself as a little part, subject to the pairs of opposites (heat and cold, pleasure and pain), you cannot be happy, because your happiness is constantly interrupted. You do not enjoy your food if your meal is frequently interrupted; so when you begin to taste pleasure by the eye or ear or some other sense and interruption comes, you are disturbed and your happiness is destroyed. But when all is covered by the Self, then there can be no interruption, and your happiness is unbroken. Hence the Upanishad says, "having renounced the realm of duality, then let him enjoy." Christ taught the same when He said "Seek ye first the kingdom of heaven," i. e. first "know thy Self," as the Greeks said. All philosophers teach the same: you must know the Self by the self; and the Upanishads are essentially the scriptures of Self-knowledge.

Do not covet any one's wealth" means do not limit yourself, for every time you covet anything outside, you recognize a lack within you and thus you limit yourself. He who is rich in the knowledge of the Self does not seek anything from the external world, knowing that nothing is apart from that Self. How can he feel separate from anything since "all is covered by the Self (the Lord)"?

II

If one should desire to live a hundred years, he should live performing Karma. So (performing Karma) he may live; but there is no other way. Thus Karma (work) will not cling to a man.

If one cannot follow the path of Self-knowledge (Jnana-Nishta) as given in the first Mantram (text), and still clings to life and earthly possessions, desiring to live long, then he may do this, by following the path of action (Karma-Nishta). By following this path, he may also earn freedom. Karma means prescribed actions, i. e. actions which are performed for the sake of the Lord. When a man performs action clinging blindly to this life, to possessions or to any earthly thing, just for the sake of itself, then his actions bind him; but when all his actions are performed with surrender to God, then they purify and liberate him. He who lives with such understanding, lives truly. Therefore whatever you do, whatever step you take, take it through the light of wisdom. If you perform action in this way, then reaction will not touch you.

REPORTS

Through December Swami Paramananda conducted the usual meetings at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. His exposition of the Yoga Aphorisms in the Tuesday evening class was made peculiarly practical and adaptable to the conditions of spiritual life in the West. On Thursday afternoon he began the study of the Upanishads, translating and explaining the Isa Upanishad and a part of the Kena-Upanishad. The class was found of such value by all who were able to attend, that it has been decided to change the hour from 4 to 8 p. m., in order that a larger number of the students may profit by it. On Sunday morning the Swami's talks dealt chiefly with the soul and its destiny. He showed that the only way man could overcome evil was by rising to a plane where good and evil no

longer exist as separate entities, but where both are gathered up in the all-embracing Divine Nature of God. Only a man who gains this conception of oneness can meet and conquer evil in this world. And as man thus lifts himself from the plane of duality to that of unity, he discovers his own immortal being. "He who has transcended his physical nature, who has penetrated below the surface of things, he reaches the centre of his being and there finds a reality which does not die." Thus man by going within and gaining the knowledge of his Divine Self becomes his own Saviour; or as St. Paul puts it, "works out his own salvation." Not until he does this can he recognize any Saviour outside. "When man cherishes his soul more than his body, then his thoughts will lead him to his Saviour and he will be able to recognize Him. Through his purity and love for Him he can accept Him and assimilate His teachings; thus his soul is redeemed."

This thought was developed more fully and with impressive earnestness at the Christmas Service, when the Swami's subject was "The Message of Christ and Christmas." "A man," he said, "who is pure in heart must see God. No one can prevent him. No church, no priest can keep him from seeing God." "But to understand a Saviour or Incarnation we must have like qualities and show them forth in our lives. When we have that something in us that was in Christ, or in Buddha, then alone it is possible for us to understand what they taught."

"God has manifested from time to time in the form of a man that man may understand what God is." He comes, however, "not to show man

His own Divine powers and glories, but to show him how as man he can manifest God." "He whose thoughts, words and actions manifest Christ, he alone will be near to Christ. Spirituality is a universal thing. It does not belong to any limited form. It is an individual problem. It is living the life; and he who lives the life, the Lord bestows on him all blessed qualities. . . If you will live the life and if you have the qualities manifested by Christ even in a small degree, you will bring the Christ Ideal nearer to others than by any other way. Whatever you do always affects mankind. You create an atmosphere by your thoughts. So if you hold noble thoughts, Christ-like thoughts, that will make the Christ-Ideal a reality to others. To draw a living picture we must ourselves be living. To portray Him we must be great artists in the spiritual realm. We must be true to our own self. We must be sincere. We must be truthful. We must constantly think of the Ideal, fill our heart and soul with That, be devoted to That, then alone can we know Him truly and represent Him in our lives."

* * *

The Ramakrishna Home of Service at Benares issues a quarterly report, and in the one recently received we learn that in the four months under review 2520 patients were treated and 89 helpless widows provided with weekly doles of rice and pice (small coin) in their homes; 19 permanent cases of homeless, aged invalids were sheltered and cared for in the branch at Janagambari. The quantity of rice collected from door to door by begging was 1634 pounds. Besides this, there were donations and subscriptions to the amount of 4883 rupees (about $1625.) and a pious Hindu lady endowed a bed in the hospital.

A new English translation of the Bhagavad Gita by Swami Paramananda will soon come from press. Great care has been taken in preparing it, to render the original Sanskrit text faithfully and at the same time to present it in such simple and direct English as to make it fully comprehensible to the Western mind. "The Gita clarified" is the judgment of more than one of those who have been permitted to read it. "It is as if some chemical had been poured in, precipitating and settling all the obscurities of previous translations and leaving only the original Divine thought in its pure essence," is the verdict of others. The language throughout has the lucid, fervent and subtle poetic quality which characterizes all the writings of the translator; and in certain passages, notably in the 1st and 11th chapters, great dramatic power is manifest. Those who have found these chapters alien and confusing heretofore, will read them now with new wonder and interest. A few foot notes have been added to explain occasional passages or words of the text, but the style is so clear that these are rarely needed.

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SPECIAL NOTICE

With the present number "The Message of the East" begins its second volume. That it has already brought help to many has been shown by the words of sincere appreciation which have come to us from many sources; and our earnest hope is that a still greater number will find new inspiration through it during the coming year. To render this possible we beg all our friends to co-operate with us in making it known to others.

We would also request our present subscribers to send their new subscriptions promptly.

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BY

SWAMI PARAMANANDA

of India

SUNDAY, 11 A. M.

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"	*23d.*	*The Bhagavid Gita*

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. FEBRUARY 1913 NO. 2

In this apparent battle of life, God is the infinite side and matter the finite side. The infinite is bound to gain the victory over the finite in the end; that is, spirit is bound to conquer matter. It may seem at times that matter overpowers spirit, but that is only for a short period. The infinite is sure to triumph at last.

What is the ego? A mere soap bubble. And on that man has piled all sorts of ornaments. He has given it a body. He has given it the senses and a mind, and all these have so encrusted it that it looks like something solid. But one good blow will break it and reveal its hollowness. That blow is death. When death comes, the whole thing bursts like a bubble. Now you worship the body. Ninety-nine-nine points per cent of mankind worship the body. Yet when the body is dead, do you care to worship it? But this body is now just as dead, just as hollow and worthless. No; you must worship the living, not the dead. You must worship the soul, not the body. Christ worshipped the living, so He could let His body be crucified. He crucified the body; He did not crucify the God

within. He said: "Let my body die that my God may live."

So if you would find the Reality behind all these hollow unrealities, you must give up the worship of the dead and seek the living God with your whole heart. You must feel the worthlessness of everything else as Nachiketas did. He knew the hollowness of wealth, of kingdoms and empires. He knew they were all nothing, less than zero; so he wanted Truth alone. And Truth was bound to come to him. We must have the same firm conviction about the hollowness of the world and then God will come to us.

What makes us forget God? False pleasures. The real God we forget and we run after all the unreal pleasures of the world. But if you want true bliss and freedom, you must give up clinging to these little enjoyments. The little pleasures the world can give you do not come from the things themselves. They come out of yourself. You think that it is the mango, or the money, or the person; but they are only the occasion which makes possible the manifestation of the pleasure inside you. These are like pieces of glass which reveal more or less of your true nature. The opaque glass which veils the flame of happiness in you, is called pain; the clear glass which lets the flame shine through, you call joy. But that flame is always burning inside you and nowhere else. Now you think that you are the son of Mr. So and So. This great blunder is the cause of all your miseries. You have not come from any man or woman. This body rises up, this body falls; but you do not rise up, you do not fall. You are eternal, self-existent, ever free.

Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

The true nature of the individual soul is eternal Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. It is egoism that has brought about so many limitations and man has forgotten his own nature.

What is my ego? Is it my hand or foot, or flesh or blood, or muscle or tendon? Ponder deep and thou shalt know that there is no such thing as "I". As by constantly peeling off the skin of an onion, so on analyzing the ego it will be found that there is not any real entity corresponding to the ego. The ultimate result of all such analysis is God. When egoism drops away Divinity manifests itself. Freedom will come when thy I-hood (egoism) will vanish and thy self will be merged in the Divinity.

Sri Ramakrishna.

The reason why a man has thousands of troubles is because he clings to the idea of self; therefore he schemes and contrives in ten thousand different ways . . . Only be cured of the disease of egoism, and your heart will be broadened even to the vastness of infinite space. . . *Hsieh Wen Ching.*

Things themselves touch not the soul, not in the least degree; nor have they admission to the soul, nor can they turn or move the soul: but the soul turns and moves itself.

Remember that which pulls the strings is the thing which is hidden within; this is the power of persuasion, this is life; this, if one may so say, is man. In contemplating thyself never include the vessel which surrounds thee and these instruments which are attached about it. For they are like an axe, differing only in this, that they grow to the body. For indeed there is no more use in these parts without the cause which moves and checks them, than in the weaver's shuttle and the writer's pen and the driver's whip. *Marcus Aurelius.*

We live in succession, in division, in parts, in particles. Meantime within man is the soul of the whole; the wise silence; the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One. And this deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is accessible to us, is not only self-sufficing and perfect in every hour, but the act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one. . . All goes to show that the soul in man is not an organ, but animates and exercises all the organs; is not a function, like the power of memory, of calculation, of comparison, but uses these as hands and feet; is not a faculty, but a light; is not the intellect or will, but the master of the intellect and the will; is the background of our being in which they lie,—an immensity not possessed and that cannot be possessed. From within and from behind, a light shines through us upon things and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all.

Emerson.

There is one ruler, the Self within all things, who makes the one form manifold. The wise who perceive Him within their Self, to them belongs eternal happiness, not to others.

There is one eternal thinker, thinking non-eternal thoughts, who, though one, fulfils the desires of many. The wise who perceive Him within their Self, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others.

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon and the stars, nor these lightnings, and much less this fire. When He (the Self) shines, everything shines after Him; by His light all this is lighted.

Katha-Upanishad.

THE NATURE OF THE SOUL AND ITS GOAL

Unpublished Lecture by Swami Vivekananda.

(Concluded from January number.)

Now the question is, if the soul is infinite, and exists everywhere, as it must do, if it is a spirit, what is meant by its taking up bodies, and passing through body after body? The idea is that the soul neither comes nor goes, neither is born nor dies. How can the omnipresent be born? It is meaningless nonsense to say that the soul lives in a body. How can the unlimited live in a limited space? But as a man having a book in his hands reads one page and turns it over, goes to the next page, reads that, turns it over, and so on, yet it is the book that is turning over, the pages that are revolving, and not he—he is where he is always; even so with regard to the soul. The whole of nature is that book which the soul is reading. Each life, as it were, is one page of that book; and that read, it is turned over, and so on and on, until the whole of the book is finished, and the soul becomes perfect, having got all the experiences of nature. Yet at the same time it never moved, nor came nor went; it was only gathering experiences. But it appears to us that we are moving. The earth moving, we yet think that the sun is moving instead of the earth, which we know to be a mistake, a delusion of the senses. So is also this delusion that we are born and that we die, that we come or that we go. We neither come nor go, nor have we been born. For where is the soul to go? There is no place for it to go. Where is it not already?

Thus the theory comes of the evolution of nature and the manifestation of the soul. The processes of evolution, higher and higher combinations, are not in the soul; it is already what it is. They are

in nature. But as nature is evolving forward into higher and higher combinations, more and more of the majesty of the soul is manifesting itself. Supposing here is a screen, and behind the screen is wonderful scenery. There is one small hole in the screen through which we can catch only a little bit of that scenery behind. Suppose that hole becomes increased in size. As the hole increases in size, more and more of the scenery behind comes within the range of vision; and when the whole screen has disappeared there is nothing between the scenery and you; you see the whole of it. This screen is the mind of man. Behind it is the majesty, the purity, the infinite power of the soul, and as the mind becomes clearer and clearer, purer and purer, more of the majesty of the soul manifests itself. Not that the soul is changing, but the change is in the screen. The soul is the unchangeable one, the immortal, the pure, the ever blessed one.

So, at last, the theory comes to this. From the highest to the lowest and most wicked man, in the greatest of human beings and the lowest of crawling worms under our feet, is the soul, pure and perfect, infinite and ever blessed. In the worm that soul is manifesting only an infinitesimal part of its power and purity, and in the greatest man it is manifesting most of it. The difference consists in the degree of manifestation, but not in the essence. Through all beings exists the same pure and perfect soul.

There are also the ideas of heavens and other places, but these are thought to be second rate. The idea of heaven is thought to be a low idea. It arises from the desire for a place of enjoyment. We foolishly want to limit the whole universe with our present experience. Children think that the

whole universe is full of children. Madmen think the whole universe a lunatic asylum, and so on. So those to whom this world is but sense enjoyment, whose whole life is in eating and feasting, with very little difference between them and brute beasts, such are naturally found to conceive of places where they will have more enjoyments, because this life is short. Their desire for enjoyment is infinite, so they are bound to think of places where they will have unobstructed enjoyment of the senses; and we see, as we go on, that those who want to go to such places will have to go; they will dream, when this dream is over, that they are in another dream where there is plenty of sense enjoyment; and when that dream breaks, they will have to think of something else. Thus they will be driving about from dream to dream.

Then comes the last theory, one more idea about the soul. If the soul is pure and perfect in its essence and nature, and if every soul is infinite and omnipresent, how is it that there can be many souls? There can not be many infinities. There cannot be two even, not to speak of many. If there were two infinities, one would limit the other, and both become finite. The Infinite can only be one, and boldly the last conclusion is approached, that it is but one and not two.

Two birds are sitting on the same tree, one on the top, the other below, both of most beautiful plumage. The one eats the fruits, while the other remains calm and majestic, concentrated in its own glory. The lower bird is eating fruits, good and evil, going after sense enjoyments; and when it eats an occasionally bitter fruit it gets higher, and looks up and sees the other bird sitting there calm and majestic, neither caring for good fruit nor for evil, sufficient unto itself, no enjoyment beyond

itself. It itself is enjoyment; what to seek beyond itself? The lower bird looks at the upper bird and wants to get near. It goes a little higher; but its old impressions are upon it, and still it goes about eating the same fruit. Again an exceptionally bitter fruit comes; it gets a shock, looks up. There the same calm and majestic one. It comes near but again is dragged down by past actions, and continues to eat the sweet and bitter fruit. Again the exceptionally bitter fruit comes, the bird looks up, gets nearer; and as it begins to get nearer and nearer, the light from the plumage of the other bird is reflected upon it. Its own plumage is melting away, and when it has come sufficiently near, the whole vision changes. The lower bird never existed, it was always the upper bird, and what it took for the lower bird was only a little bit of a reflection.

Such is the nature of the soul. This human soul goes after sense-enjoyments, vanities of the world; like animals it lives only in the senses, lives only in momentary titivations of the nerves. When there comes a blow, for a moment the head reels, and everything begins to vanish, and it finds that the world was not what it thought it to be, that life was not so smooth. It looks upward and sees the infinite Lord a moment, catches a glimpse of the majestic one, comes a little nearer, but is dragged away by its past actions. Another blow comes, and sends it back again. It catches another glimpse of the infinite presence, comes nearer and as it approaches nearer and nearer, it begins to find out that its individuality—its low, vulgar, intensely selfish individuality is melting away; the desire to sacrifice the whole world to make that little thing happy, is melting away; and as it gets gradually nearer and nearer, nature begins to melt away.

When it has come sufficiently near, the whole vision changes and it finds that it was the other bird, that this infinity which it had viewed as from a distance was its own Self, this wonderful glimpse that it had got of the glory and majesty was its own Self, and it indeed was that reality. The soul then finds that that which is true in everything, that which is in every atom, everywhere present, the essence of all things, the God of this universe, "know that thou art He, know that thou art free."

ISA-UPAISHAD

(Knowledge of the Supreme Lord and of the Self).

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda.

(Continued from the January number.)

III

Those who have destroyed the Atman (Soul or Self), after leaving their bodies, go to the worlds of the Asuras (ignorant, godless creatures) covered with blind darkness.

The idea of the attainment to bright and happy regions as a reward for well-doers and the falling into unhappy realms of darkness as a punishment for evil-doers is common to all great religions. But Vedanta claims that this condition of heaven and hell is only temporary and comes as the result of our own thoughts and actions. Since these are finite, their result must necessarily be finite and non-eternal; for a finite cause can only produce that which is finite.

What does it mean "to destroy the soul"? The soul is immortal, how can it be destroyed? It seems to be destroyed when the mind is enshrouded by ignorance. Those who hold themselves under

the sway of ignorance, who do not pay any attention to the higher nature, who serve the flesh and neglect the Atman or the real Self, they are not able to behold the effulgent and indestructible nature of their soul, and hence they fall into the realm where the light does not shine. Here the Upanishad shows that the only hell is absence of knowledge. As long as the soul is overpowered by the darkness of ignorance, not having sought Self-knowledge, a man is the slave of nature and must accept whatever comes as the fruit of his thoughts and deeds. When he strays into the path of unreality, the Sages declare that he destroys himself; because he who clings to the perishable body and regards it as his true self must experience death many times. The soul, however, can never really be destroyed; it can only be obscured. But as long as the embodied being remains unconscious of its free, effulgent and indestructible nature, cherishing the body, he cannot attain final emancipation and must go through the suffering of birth and death.

IV

That One (Self), though unmoving, is swifter than the mind. The Devas (senses) can never overtake It, which ever goes before. Though sitting, It travels faster than those who run. By It the air (life-breath) sustains all living beings.

This verse explains the value of the Atman or Soul. Although It does not move, being stable in Its nature, yet It travels faster than thought. Although It remains still, because not absent from any place, yet It outruns those who pursue It. A finite object you can take from one place and put in another. Your mind when it is in one place cannot be in another. Anything that is finite can

only occupy one space at a time. But the Atman, being infinite and omnipresent, is everywhere; hence, however fast anyone may run to overtake It, already It is there before him.

We see that we cannot live without breathing air; but that all-pervading air is supported by this Self: therefore we cannot live without that Self. By that Self alone all this universe is pervaded; how can we live wisely or enjoy true happiness until we know the source of our life and the universe?

The wise know what the body leads to and what the Atman (Self) leads to; so they are never deluded or unhappy. This body, however you may try to make it real, you cannot keep it from being destroyed; while the Self, try as you may to make It unreal, It still remains existent. There is no existance for the unreal and the real can never be non-existent. The unreal is the perishable and changing, the real is the unchanging and imperishable. Let a man once know that, then all delusions will drop off and he will enjoy true blessedness.

V

It moves and It moves not. It is far and also It is near. It is within all and also It is without all this.

Because that living Soul moves, the universe moves. Anything that moves, moves through that Force; and whatever is motionless is stable through That; because both moving and unmoving exist in and proceed from It. It is near to those who have the power to understand It, for It dwells in the heart of everyone; but It seems far to those whose mind is covered by the clouds of delusion. It is within, because It is the Soul of all creatures;

and It is without as the essence of the whole external universe, infilling it like the all-pervading ether.

VI

He who sees all beings in the Self and the Self in all beings, he never turns away from It (the Self).

VII

He who perceives all beings as the Self, for him how can there be delusion or grief, when he sees this oneness (everywhere)?

The one who perceives the Self everywhere, never shrinks from anything, because he has realized the unity of all with his own Atman or Soul. Christ said "Love thy neighbor as thyself", but only he who sees God within all living beings and all living beings within God, and also God dwelling in his own Self, he alone is able to fulfill the commandment; for how can he hate any living thing? When the knower of Self sees every creature one with his own Self, then all his perplexities, false perceptions and sorrows drop from him, because he has become one with the universal Self and thus has found that which leads him beyond delusion and grief.

The idea of oneness with all living things sometimes frightens people because they are afraid of losing their individuality. This comes from our conception that life is nothing apart from the body. We know very little of the Soul. We identify ourselves entirely with our physical nature and believe that our individuality is wholly dependent on that. But the wise men declare that we have not yet found our individuality. We have not yet acquired our true being. Many believe that Buddha's Nirvana means annihilation. How can that be,

when Buddha attained Nirvana before He began His work? If it meant annihilation, how could He have accomplished His mission? Christ, too, reached the same enlightenment or this ideal oneness before He set out on His work in the world. This state of Nirvana, or communion with God, or oneness with the Self, or superconsciousness, does not mean self-annihilation. It means finding yourself, finding your true individuality, which never changes; and until you find that, you cannot begin to enjoy. Therefore the first mantram or text of this Upanishad says; "Cover the whole universe with That"; i. e. see Him everywhere; do not have any conception of duality. When you have done that, then alone you will be able to enjoy life; and every act you perform will liberate you and also cause the liberation of others.

VIII

He (the Self) encircled all, resplendent, bodiless, spotless, without sinews, pure, untouched by sin, all-seeing, all-knowing, all-pervading, self-existent, He disposed all things duly for eternal years.

This text gives the definition of the true Self of man. When our mind is cleansed from the dross of matter, then alone can we behold the vast, radiant, subtle, ever-pure and spotless Self, the true cause of our existence. The Self travels everywhere and covers everything. It is beyond time and space, because it is not bound by finite form. It is the creator of all the functions which perform actions in our body. He who beholds this subtle Self through a purified understanding, does not grieve over any creature and transcends all bodily limitations.

IX

They fall into blind darkness, who worship Avidya (ignorance and delusion); they fall, as it were, into greater darkness who worship Vidya (knowledge).

Knowledge here means relative knowledge concerning the phenomenal world, not the ultimate knowledge of the Self; and such knowledge can never be the means of liberation. On the contrary, it brings a stronger bondage through attachment for the satisfaction which such knowledge gives. Therefore it is called the golden chain; while Avidya is the iron chain or chain of misery, which people create by their Karma (ignorant actions). The word "worship" is used in the sense of attachment or cherishing. When we cherish this world of external visible phenomena, without knowing its origin or cause, when we cling to bodily conditions without being conscious of the Soul, then we worship Avidya (matter, the unreal); when we pursue the knowledge of the higher forces of nature and become attached thereto, then we worship Vidya.

X

By Vidya one end is attained; by Avidya, another. Thus we have heard from the wise men who taught us this.

XI

He who knows at the same time both Vidya and Avidya, he crosses over death by Avidya and attains immortality through Vidya.

This means that one must have knowledge of the visible and invisible world at the same time. One who has mere knowledge of the phenomenal realm cannot attain immortality, because he is still

bound by the physical. One who, on the other hand, possesses only knowledge of the invisible without that of the visible, is also limited and cannot know immortality. He who devotes himself wholly to the invisible and ignores the visible, is leaving out one part of the universe. Whoever tries to neglect either, limits himself. To attain wisdom one must include all phases of knowledge, all phases of experience. One must not leave out any part of the universe.

As long as you dwell in the realm of duality, you must take both visible and invisible; but there is another plane where there is no division, where He exists as One, where to leave out anything is to leave out a part of Him. So you must never divide yourself and say, "This part is good, that part is bad." You must take the whole of yourself. You must cover the whole of yourself with Him. He who knows the nature of both the changeable and the Unchangeable, first transcends death through the clear knowledge of changeable phenomena; then through the knowledge of the unchangeable and subtle Self, he attains immortality.

(*To be continued.*)

REPORTS

The meetings at the Vedanta Centre of Boston continued as usual through January. Swami Paramananda, resuming the study of the "Great Teachers of the East", begun at Christmas time with "The Message of Christ", explained on the first Sunday of the month the "Message of Krishna". He corrected the prevailing false impression that Vedanta is a religion of quietism, by showing how the whole teaching of the Bhagavad Gita is based on the necessity for each man to fully accomplish his duty in the world before he can enter on the

life of contemplation. That until he has learned through actual experience the relative value of worldly and spiritual things, he is not fit to take up the contemplative life; and should he try to do so prematurely, his own nature will impel him back to a life of activity. In the soul's onward march, the first stage must be a righteous war for Truth. Then when a man has fought his battle bravely, unconcerned as to victory or defeat, he will be ready to follow the higher way of wisdom. Yet the Lord Krishna plainly declares that only the ignorant make a distinction between the paths of action and of renunciation; he who faithfully follows either will obtain the fruit of both. On the following Sunday Zoroaster's cardinal doctrine of "good thoughts, good words, and good deeds" was expounded and related to the Message of Sri Krishna. Indeed the whole purpose of the course was to point out the fundamental harmony in the messages of all the different great religious teachers.

* * *

The new translation of the Bhagavad-Gita by Swami Paramananda will be out before the middle of February. Although a faithful and even literal rendering of the Sanskrit, the English has a clear-cut illumined and natural quality which makes it seem more a direct version than a translation. Both spirit and letter have been preserved in a remarkable degree, and no one can read the wonderful words of Sri Krishna as rendered by the translator without gaining a new and deeper understanding of them. Although a few footnotes have been added, they scarcely seem necessary, the style is so lucid and comprehensible. The book will be in small format, prettily bound in flexible cloth with gilt top. Price 75 cents.

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The Message of the East

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"	*9th.*	*Duty and Service*
"	*16th.*	*What is Realization?*
"	*23rd.*	*Life after Death*
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II MARCH, 1913 No. 3

Some people cannot live without God and some cannot live without the world. Some laugh at those who are religious and call them superstitious, while others find the whole source of their life in meditation and spiritual practice. But there can be no completeness of life, there can be no security until we have touch with the Divine. Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "When thou hast work in the world to perform, do thy work with one hand and hold fast to the Feet of the Lord with the other. When thy work is done, fold His Feet to thy heart with both thy hands." To do this, practice is necessary. You may say: "I cannot feel Truth." That is only because you have not practised. You feel heat and cold, pleasure and pain, but you do not feel the presence of God. But how are you going to feel it without practice? We have practised the world enough; we have taken it into our system. We must take God in the same way. Whatever we actually experience in this life, that we understand, we believe. What we have not known through experience, how can we have faith in that? But we must give our whole thought for the discovery or experience of spiritual things. When we do this, we begin to unfold. Our thoughts begin to penetrate the inner realm and

then we see that man is not merely this surface being. There is something more of him. He is not this body only. We must go within to find the whole of him.

To this end meditation is recommended. To meditate, first we have to gather ourself. The first step is collecting, the second is concentrating. We must be one-pointed, then we must take an Ideal to think about. We all have some special point to fix our thoughts upon. Different ones have different things to devote themselves to and they gain knowledge in that direction; but as long as the mind remains on the ordinary external plane, it is easily carried away. It is only when it goes within that it acquires real strength and understanding.

The cause of all unhappiness is not outside but inside. Lord Buddha felt this and that was what led Him to contemplate, to go within to find the cause of misery. The shock which the world gave Him first sent Him within. Then He gave a blow to the world and became the Saviour from misery. All great redeemers tell us how to find our spiritual nature, how to turn within and discover the source of our being. They tell us how to rise above pleasure and pain, how to go beyond and find that which cannot be seen by these eyes, which cannot be heard by these ears.

Our mind and all our senses must be spiritualized, must be initiated to higher things. The eyes, which have been accustomed to the sights of this world, must be initiated to something different. Therefore they are closed at the time of meditation to deny them ordinary sight. Likewise the ears must be closed, that they may be initiated to the holy sounds that come from the depths of our soul. In this way we must sanctify the whole being—mind, heart and body, the whole man must be consecrated. Then

come peace and stillness. Before the Supreme Being every thing becomes silent, and in that silence we realize the Highest.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

First, realize God in the temple of your heart. To that end you must cleanse it of all impurities—all sin and iniquity—all attachment to this world caused by the senses.

He who does not find God within himself will never find Him outside himself. But he who sees Him in the temple of his soul, sees Him also in the temple of the universe. . . . Meditate upon God, the Sole Existence, Knowledge and Bliss Eternal, and you shall have Joy Everlasting.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

What is the chief end of man? The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.

—*Westminster Catechism.*

Since the roots of our nature are established in Divinity, from which also we are produced, we should tenaciously adhere to our root; for streams also of water, and other offspring of the earth, when the roots are cut off, become rotten and dry.

—*The Phythagorean Sentences of Demophilus.*

For it is impossible that he who has been once made perfect by love, and feasts eternally and insatiably on the boundless joy of contemplation, should delight in small and grovelling things. . . Wherefore, also, he who holds converse with God

must have his soul immaculate and stainlessly pure, it being essential to have made himself perfectly good. . . . And his whole life is a holy festival.

—Clement of Alexandria.

He, whose heart is unattached to external contacts (of the senses), realizes the happiness that is in the Self; being united with Brahman (the Supreme) by meditation, he attains to eternal bliss.

The enjoyments which are born through contact (with sense-objects) are ever generators of misery; (they are) with beginning and end. O son of Kunti, the wise do not seek pleasure in them. . . .

He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that saint, being well-established in Brahman, attains to absolute freedom.

—Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita.

All His glory and beauty is from within, and there He delighteth Himself. The inward man He often visiteth; and hath with him sweet discourse, pleasant solace, much peace, familiarity exceeding wonderful.

O Everlasting Light, surpassing all created luminaries, flash forth Thy lightning from above, piercing all the most inward parts of my heart. Make clean, make glad, make bright and make alive my spirit, with all the powers thereof, that I may cleave unto Thee in ecstasies of joy. O when will that blessed and desired hour come, that Thou mayest satisfy me with Thy Presence, and be unto me all in all! So long as this is not granted me I shall not have full joy.

Thomas à Kempis.

SEARCH AFTER HAPPINESS

Class-Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Everyone from the highest man to the lowest animalcule is searching after happiness. Some believe in their own muscle and fight for their happiness. Some go beyond nature and try to get satisfaction of desires and happiness from the invisible powers which support the universe. But everyone is seeking happiness outside through the five senses. Even in heaven is the same sort of happiness. This happiness is the result of the union of the physical universe with man through his five senses. When they come together in a harmonious manner, happiness is the result; when they unite inharmoniously, pain is the result.

This is the experience of all who seek happiness outside. Always the man must struggle and suffer. He must go through much pain to get a little happiness. He must throw away much to get little. In heaven it is the same. This search for happiness is a terrible bondage, even in heaven, for he cannot stay there forever. But ask yourself whether you love liberty, quietness, peace, bliss. At once the answer comes that you want all these. Everyone wants peace, but never is any peace to be found here. You even have to struggle if you would stand on your own legs. Every action of the body implies struggle.

That which transcends thirst for happiness, thirst for wealth, and desire is called emancipation. These three bind man. They hold him fast to Samsara, to the wheel of birth and death. The poor soul is in that wheel, sometimes going up, sometimes going down, never at rest. Is there then no way out? Yes, there is a way out. There is surely someone above me who keeps me down. Is that Power a tyrant? No, he is my real Father; here

"real" means eternal. Something cannot come out of nothing, something must come out of something. So my real Father must be an eternal Father. Naked I came into this world, without caste or creed; I was brought here by this Power. If so, what is my relation to Him? As a servant to the master, as a child to the father. But He is my Eternal Father, with Him I am eternally connected. Therefore it is my duty to obey this real Father, not my temporary father. If the temporary father asks me to act contrary to the will of the Eternal Father, then I must disobey him as Prahlada did.

You know how happy a man becomes who learns that his father has a million pounds; so when I find that I have a father who is Lord of the whole universe, how much happier must I be. Again, just as out of a horse, a horse is born; and out of an ass, an ass is born; so out of a God, a God must be born. Therefore, if God is my Father, I must be as good as God Himself and as happy. If I would realize this, I must give up the little for the great. I must not tie myself to the little love for earthly relations. If I would have true Anandam (bliss), I must give up the little happiness of the world. If I would make myself one with the great Spirit of the universe, I must cease to identify myself with my present environment. To go to Him, I must give up all attachment. He is Spirit, so I must seek him in spirit. He is consciousness, so I must search for Him in my consciousness. When consciousness leaves the body, at that time the body becomes like a chair or a table. It is your consciousness which makes the body different from the matter of the chair. But you have so identified yourself with your body that you are not conscious that it is a burden. If you have a load on your back, you feel it; but you do not feel the load of

the body. Yet the weight of it you will know by lifting a dead body. So if you carry this load so easily, it shows how powerful you are; and the Atman carries it as easily as it would a straw.

If God is a conscious Being, He must be sought in consciousness, in the Atman, in the Self; and you must move inside yourself, not in matter, because it is unconscious. First you must discover Him inside yourself. Spirit lives in spirit. Where spirit is, there cannot be matter. So if you would seek spirit, you must seek Him in spirit. And where is spirit? Inside. So you must search for Him inside yourself. God lives in the heart of every living being. Where does the great God live? Man is His abode. He lives in man. He lives in man means that He lives in spirit. This is the real temple of God. There may be temples outside, but they are only photographs of this human temple. Temples have, you know, five walls, just as man has the five sheaths, and one must pass them all to come to God in the inner shrine. That is the seat of God. To go to Him, you must cross the big walls; you will not find Him outside. So in the same way, you will never find God in the universe, because He is always hidden inside the heart.

If then God is in me, I can go to Him easily. I do not have to buy a ticket. It requires no effort on my part. In reality, however, it is the most difficult thing in the world. If you have the power to go inside yourself, then you have conquered the whole universe. It is not Alexander the Great or Napoleon who have conquered the world, their conquest was only temporary. It was a carpenter's son, a cowherd boy. They are ruling the world; and they are able to do it because they went inside themselves.

What does it mean to go inside yourself? To go

inside means to go away from earthly attachments, from ambition, from all your ideas and desires. Some may say that meditation is no better than dreaming; let a man do something, instead of merely sitting idle; everyone must work. But what is the hardest thing in the world? To give up work or activity? How many can give up work? None. Hunger will drive you back. You cannot sit long in one place. Man as Mr. So-and-So, his nature is to work; but man as spirit is beyond all work. I am telling you to seek within this little mannikin the great man. But this is very hard, because to do so, you will have to give up all your pet ideas. People ask: Why go inside where it is all darkness; why not stay in the world which is lighted by the sun, moon, and stars? So ninety-nine per cent. of mankind prefer to stay outside themselves and they go on and on in this physical universe. Therefore it is said in the Gita: "Out of thousands and thousands some one will go inside himself; and out of thousands who do, some one will find Me."

Some may go inside, but they meet that terrible enemy, the mind. Even Arjuna said: "The mind is so rebellious and hard to control that to curb it I consider as hard as to curb the wind." So against this you have to fight. How to fight? You must purify the mind. How to purify the mind? Develop love for God. By means of love we can do everything. If you love God with your whole heart, then it is very easy to give up. Love is a natural thing. Even an idiot can love. If you can direct your love towards spirit, it will lead you to spirit. It is these earthly attachments which hold you down like a captive balloon. You are tied to your earthly relations, tied to your money, tied to your ambition. But cut all these ties and at once you will go up. Just as a hungry baby runs to the mother, so you

must increase your love for God; then you will go up towards God and you will realize Him. What will happen then? You will be the happiest man in the whole universe. You will be like a little child. The father and mother are slaves to the baby. It may go anywhere without any feeling of care or responsibility, but they must always take care of it. So if you can become the baby of God, you may be happier than even God Himself.

There is another path—that of discrimination; but it is very difficult. Only a few are intelligent enough to follow it. All have preached Bhakti. Christ, Mohammed, all have preached the path of devotion; but only two have preached the path of discrimination—Buddha and Sankara. Buddha preached pure Jnana (the path of Wisdom), and what He taught was so difficult that few can understand it. They began to misunderstand as soon as He was dead. Sankara has preached a very definite path. First, He says, you must purify the mind. To do this there are four methods: Discriminating the real from the unreal. This you can do by science and by the study of books. But modern science will not do this for you. You must study the Vedic science and learn to disentangle soul from matter. Second, you must cease to care for earthly happiness. You must control the senses. You must bear all sorts of difficulties without caring to remedy them. You must be dead to earthly enjoyments. You must have faith in the Scriptures as well as in those who explain the Scriptures. You must not regard this world as your home. You are spirit and you must seek to return to spirit-land.

True religion teaches, not how to go to heaven, but how to go to God. To do this you must give up this little self and realize the infinite Self, which

may be called God. Man should not seek sensual enjoyment, but should seek that which leads him to God. There is a natural sensual desire in every man, but this should not be degraded to brutal desire. Desire is good, but it should not be misdirected. Health must be preserved, because by means of this body we may realize God. Why should I eat? Why should I visit holy places? These will preserve the body and by this I shall be able to realize God. Why should I preserve these eyes? To see the perennial beauty of God.

What should be the duty of each individual soul? Is it the duty of every man to be a worker? No; but every man should struggle to know the Truth. The knowers of Truth have known that to be Truth which is one without a second. Inside man is the true temple. The five Koshas (sheaths) are the five walls of the temple; the heart is the secret shrine. Here God dwells. The end and aim of every man should be to realize Truth. But between him and Truth there is a big barrier. What? The mind. To remove this barrier we must purify the mind. This must be done by self-exertion. A man will have to have great patience, great perseverance; but when he persists and purifies the mind, he will break down all barriers and come face to face with the Supreme Truth. Then he will attain eternal peace and bliss.

Take a very, very high stand; knowing our universal nature, we must look with perfect calmness upon all the panorama of the world. All pleasures of the senses or even of the mind are evanescent, but within ourselves is the one true unrelated pleasure, dependent upon nothing. It is perfectly free, it is bliss. The more our bliss is within, the more spiritual we are. *Swami Vivekananda.*

ISA-UPANISHAD

(Knowledge of the Supreme Lord and of the Self)
Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda.
(Concluded from Jan.-Feb. numbers.)

XII.

They fall into blind darkness, who worship the unborn invisible Prakriti (Nature) and they fall into greater darkness who worship the visible Prakriti.

XIII.

By the worship of the unborn invisible Prakriti one end is attained; by the worship of the visible Prakriti, another. Thus we have heard from the wise men who taught us this.

XIV.

He who knows at the same time both the unborn Prakriti (the cause of manifestation) and destruction (the perishable), he crosses over death through destruction (knowledge of the perishable) and attains immortality through unborn Prakriti (or through the knowledge of the Final Cause).

This particular Upanishad deals chiefly with the Invisible Cause and the visible manifestation, and the whole trend of its teaching is to show that they are one and the same, one being the outcome of the other; hence no perfect knowledge is possible without simultaneous comprehension of both. The wise men declare that he who worships in a one-sided way, whether the visible or the Invisible, does not reach the highest goal. He alone who has a co-ordinated understanding of both the visible and the Invisible, of matter and spirit, of activity and that which is above activity, conquers nature and thus overcomes death. By work, by making the mind

steady and by following the prescribed rules given in the Scriptures, a man gains wisdom. By the light of that wisdom he is able to perceive the Invisible Cause in all visible forms, and he who finds Him here finds Him everywhere. Knowledge of the Supreme begins with ordinary things, because He is present in every manifested form. Therefore the wise man sees Him in everything. They who have a true conception of God are never separated from Him. They exist in Him and He in them.

XV.

The face of Truth is hidden by a golden disk. O Pushan (Effulgent Being)! uncover (Thy Face) that I, the worshipper of Truth, may behold Thee.

XVI.

O Pushan! O Sun, Sole Traveller (of the heavens), Controller of all, Son of Prajapati collect Thy rays and gather up Thy burning effulgence. I behold Thy blessed and lovely form; the Purusha (Effulgent Being) who dwells within Thee, I am He.

Here the sun, who is the giver of all light, is used as the symbol of the Infinite, giver of all wisdom. The seeker after Truth prays to the Effulgent One to control His dazzling rays, that he may behold the Truth. Having perceived it, he proclaims: "Now I see that that Effulgent Being and I are one and the same and my delusion is destroyed." By the light of Truth he is able to discriminate between the real and the unreal and the knowledge thus gained convinces him that he is one with the Supreme, that there is no difference between himself and the Supreme Truth or as Christ said, "I and my Father are one."

XVII.

May my life-breath go to the all-pervading and immortal air, and let this body be burned to ashes. Om! O mind, remember thy deeds! O mind, remember, remember thy deeds! Remember!

Seek not fleeting results as the reward of thy actions, O mind! Strive only for the Imperishable. This Mantram or text is often chanted at the hour of death to remind one of the perishable nature of the body and the eternal nature of the soul. When the clear vision of the distinction between the mortal body and the immortal soul dawns in the heart, then all thirst for physical pleasure or clinging to material things drops away and one can say "let the body be burned to ashes" that the soul may attain its freedom; for death is nothing more than the casting off of a worn-out garment.

XVIII.

O Agni (Bright Being)! Lead us by the good path. O God! Thou knowest all our deeds, remove all evil from us. To Thee we offer our prostrations again and again.

Here ends this Upanishad.

This Upanishad is called Isa-Upanishad, that which gives Brahma-Vidya or the knowledge of the All-Pervading Deity. The prevailing thought through it is to cover all with the Omnipresent Lord, then enjoy life; for only when it is so covered can we realize true happiness. If we are not fully conscious of that which sustains our life, that by which we live, how are we to perform our functions? Whatever we see, whether movable or immovable, what is good and what we consider bad, what we call light and what we call darkness, it is all

"That." We must not divide our conception of the universe, for in dividing it we have only fragmentary knowledge and we thus limit ourself.

He who sees all beings in his Self and his Self in all beings, he never suffers, never dies; because when he sees all creatures within his true Self, then jealousy, grief, hatred vanish. He alone can love. That All-pervading One is self-effulgent, birthless, deathless, pure, untainted by sin and sorrow. Knowing this, he becomes free from the bondage of duality and transcends death.

Transcending death means when we have realized the difference between body and soul and have absolutely identified ourself with the Soul. When the conception of the Soul dawns in our heart, that Soul which never decays, when that comes and we realize our true nature, when we actually see that Radiant Being within ourself, then we no longer identify ourself with the body which dies, and we do not die with the body.

Self-knowledge has always been the theme of the Sages, and the Upanishads treat especially of the knowledge of the Self and also, therefore, of the knowledge of God; for there is no difference between that Self and God. They are one and the same. That which comes out of the Whole, which is infinite, must also be infinite; hence that Self is Whole. He is the ocean, we are the drops. So long as we remain separate from the ocean, we are small and weak; but when we are one with the ocean, then we have all the strength of the ocean. Similarly, so long as man remains separate from the Whole, he is helpless; but when he identifies himself with It, then he becomes mighty.

This external has no existence apart from that out of which it comes. It has existence in relation to the mind, but it has no permanent existence; and

when we depend upon outer things we suffer, because they are ever changing. They seem one way to us today and tomorrow they may seem quite different. As we unfold, they will constantly change. Only as we come to know them in relation to the Whole, will they have any real existence.

The Sages tell us, all dualities must be overcome. First what we call evil must be overcome by good: but beyond good there is a state where there is neither good nor evil, but which is the source of both and which overcomes both. These dualities are bound by time, space and causation; hence they must be limited and cannot be the goal. Therefore go beyond both if you wish to attain wisdom and freedom. When wisdom is attained, it means that knower, known and knowledge have become one. These things may seem very intricate because of their subtlety; but when we earnestly meditate upon them, we shall see that they are true. When we have known the Self, we shall find that we also know God, and we shall realize that God and our true Self are one. That is what this Upanishad teaches.

REPORTS

Swami Vivekananda's birthday was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Sunday, Feb. 2nd. There was the regular Service with lecture by Swami Paramananda in the morning and a special Service at 4.30 in the afternoon, at which the attendance was exceptionally large. The various offerings of fruit and flowers covered the platform, where a picture of Swami Vivekananda stood. The Service opened with music, chanting and meditation. Then Swami Paramananda delivered an address in which he showed that the Message given by the Swami Vivekananda was as much for the

West as for the East, because its salient purpose was to unite the world by a strong cord of understanding and sympathy. He believed that East had a special message for the West and the West had its message to the East, and only as understanding and sympathy were established between the two could they enrich and help each other. Union of thought without the submergence or destruction of the Ideals of either hemisphere, this was Swami Vivekananda's watchword; and when such union had been established, he believed that a new and glorious chapter in the history of the world's civilization would be written. Those who recognized the force and utility of this harmonizing message, the Swami continued, should stand together and support it by their life and steadfast service. In no other way could they pay a more fitting tribute to the memory of Swami Vivekananda.

Sister Devamata next spoke on the chief lessons of the great Swami's life, after which Swami Paramananda chanted the Sanscrit "Litany" and gave the benediction of peace. The blessed fruits and flowers from the altar were then distributed to all present.

The Birthday was also celebrated at the other Centers in New York and San Francisco as well as in every part of India.

* * *

It is with great joy that we welcome the first volume of the Life of Swami Vivekananda published by the Mayavati Peace Retreat in the Himalayas. It is itself a large book of four hundred pages, yet it is only one of three volumes to appear, the heroic work of the devoted disciples of the Swami at the Peace Retreat. This first volume, a review of which will appear in a later number, is sufficient to show the unique and remarkable character of the work. $2.50 per vol.

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The Message of the East

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II APRIL, 1913 No. 4

Among all the difficult problems which perplex the human intellect, the most difficult is man himself. Whence has he come? Whither is he going? Is this the whole of his life or does he continue to live after death? The past is invisible, the future is invisible; he stands helpless in an ever-shifting present, not knowing why he is here or what power is guiding him. He sees all around him differences in character and condition: some healthy, happy and prosperous; others miserable, perhaps even penniless and starving. Why these inequalities? Is the Lord partial? If some are happy and others unhappy, there must be some reason. Vedanta says, it is a man's own Karma. His present condition is the fruit of his past thoughts and deeds. Whatever he has sown, that he must reap. This is an inevitable law. What he deserves he gets. Nothing can take from him what he has earned, and nothing can bring him anything else.

We may ask: In the case of a blind crippled baby, from whence does his Karma come? Also from his past. If we believe in a future existence, we cannot help believing in a pre-existence: for if the present forms the basis of a future life, so this life must rest upon some previous existence, of which it was once the future. Life does not begin

or end with this gross material body. There exists a subtle body consisting of mind, intellect. the individual ego and the vital forces. All our Karma is stored up there and through that moulds our future destiny. This explains why there are such distinctions and differences. All beings cannot be equal because they do not act or live in the same way.

But which among all our different thoughts and actions determine our future environment and condition? Lord Krishna declares in the Gita: "Whatever state one dwells upon in the end, at the time of leaving the body, that alone he attains, because of his constant thought of that state." We may say: Then it does not matter what we do during our lifetime if we think of God at the moment of our departure. But we cannot deceive God. We cannot possibly hold our mind on any unaccustomed thought at the time of death. Dying means separation of the spirit from the body, a process of acute pain. At that precarious moment to think of anything which we have not lived and thought of all our life is impossible. That is the reason why we should guard well our thoughts and deeds. "He who, at the time of death, thinking of Me (the Lord) alone, goes forth, leaving the body, he attains unto My Being. Therefore at all times think of Me and fight (perform actions). Having offered thy mind and intellect to Me, thou shalt without doubt come unto Me. . . . By the steadfast practice of meditation with unwavering mind and constant thought of the Supreme Divine Being, one goes to Him. (He who thus meditates on Him) at the time of death, with unflinching mind, possessed with devotion, he attains to the Supreme Divine Being."

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

As a man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others which are new. —*Bhagavad-Gita.*

Is this hypothesis so laughable merely because it is the oldest? because the human understanding, before the sophistries of the schools had dissipated and debilitated it, lighted upon it at once? . . . Why should I not come back as often as I am capable of acquiring fresh knowledge, fresh experience? Do I bring away so much from once that there is nothing to repay the trouble of coming back? —*Lessing.*

None but hasty thinkers will reject it on the ground of inherent absurdity. Like the doctrine of evolution itself, that of transmigration has its roots in the realm of reality. —*Huxley.*

Seeing, then, that it is clear, that whatever moves itself is eternal, can there be any doubt that the soul is so? For everything is inanimate which is moved by an external force; but everything which is animate is moved by an interior force, which also belongs to itself. For this is the peculiar nature and power of the soul; and if the soul be the only thing in the whole world which has the power of self-motion, then certainly it never had a beginning, and therefore it is eternal. —*Cicero.*

They say that the soul of man is immortal, and at one time has an end which is termed dying, and at another time is born again, but is never destroyed. . . . The soul then being immortal, and

having been born again many times, and having seen all things that exist, whether in this world or the world below, has knowledge of them all, and it is no wonder that she should be able to call to remembrance all that she ever knew about virtue, and about everything; for as all nature is akin, and the soul has learned all things, there is no difficulty in her eliciting, or as men say learning, out of a single recollection all the rest, if a man is strenuous and does not faint; for all inquiry and all learning is but recollection.

—*Plato.*

To whatever object a man's own mind is attached, to that he goes strenuously together with his deed; and having obtained the end of whatever deed he does on earth, he returns again from that world which is the temporary reward of his deed.

So much for the man who desires. But as to the man who does not desire, who, not desiring, freed from desires, is satisfied in his desires, or desires the Self only, his vital energies do not depart elsewhere,—being Brahman (one with the Supreme) he goes to Brahman.

—*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.*

The caterpillar gets itself imprisoned in its self-woven cocoon. So the worldly soul gets itself entangled in the meshes of its desires. But when the caterpillar develops into a bright and beautiful butterfly, it rends the cocoon and enjoys freedom. So the worldly soul can be free from the meshes of Maya (birth and rebirth) by developing the wings of Viveka (discrimination) and Vairagya (renunciation).

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

EVOLUTION AND REINCARNATION

Lecture by Sister Devamata

Grave deliberation is the sign of wisdom everywhere. Whatever is well done is deliberately done. The impulsive, quick action is the inferior or incomplete action. Efficient work is always deliberate; and the more permanent to be the result, the quieter and slower the process. Thus in nature we find organic growth the slowest because it is to be the most lasting. The mushroom that springs up in a night shrivels before sunset. The butterfly that is born so easily flies quickly to its death. The lower forms of life have short periods of parturition, because they need to create a body scarcely more than for a summer holiday; while the higher forms of life that are to persist through winter and summer, through cold and heat, are slowly, carefully formed. But nowhere is nature guilty of haste or thoughtless action. Always each step of evolution and growth is wisely counted and then taken with quiet deliberation, for to her a thousand years are as a day.

If this be true in the lower realms of her activity, how much more must it be in dealing with her greatest achievement, the human soul. The highest thing that we have yet perceived on this earth must be the longest and the slowest in its development. Think how long it takes us to master our bodies. Look at the little child scarcely acquainted with its hands and feet, not knowing the use of its senses, crying for the moon as for the candle flame within reach, unable to make use of this instrument, the body, until day after day it has examined it, moved it, studied it and thus grown little by little into an acquaintance and understanding of it.

Then how much longer does it take to make

acquaintance with its mind. How slow and nearly unconscious are those first processes of thought. With what gentle wisdom must it be led from a to b, from b to c, from one to two, from two to three. And still slower is the quiet, steady development of the power of reason, of the higher intellection. How tardily does a man become a reasonable being. For how many years does he move along the line of his impulses, yielding to anger and impatience, impelled by his desires, led to reason only after he has blundered, and then making his process of reasoning little more than the review of his mistake. Scarcely indeed has he begun to develop the power of reason and discrimination before his body is aged and ready to totter into the grave.

Yet there lies beyond still another realm that he has not touched. Perhaps when grief has rubbed away the scales from his eyes, when disappointment has cleansed and purified his heart, when his body has gone beyond the power of satisfaction of desire, when the senses are growing weary and act slowly, perhaps then does he begin dimly to perceive that part of his being which is yet in embryo, but about which he knows nothing. Can you say that, when this life is ended and he lays his body down, his chance is over? Nature who wastes no effort, Nature who never halts until she has brought even the smallest seed to its fullest development, Nature who works quietly and steadily all through the summer, not merely to create the fruit of that summer, but to leave the bud of the next season ready, as the chestnut wrapped in its fur coat to guard it through the winter: can you say that careful Mother Nature leaves this her greatest task unfinished? Go out into the woods in the

late autumn, brush aside the dead leaves and you will find all the little green leaves of the next year's growth there hidden close to the ground. Is it possible that when she provides so well for the plants and the fruits of the field, she wastes this highest fruit, the human soul? It is not possible. Brush aside those leaves of the dying life and you will find already there the first little green shoots of a new existence. Not merely after the body is gone, but already in this life is the embryo of the new life formed.

Man is not dying when he drops this body, he is being born again. Evolution is going on unchecked. Because the leaves have fallen, it does not mean that the tree has stopped living or growing. And this body is like the leaves. We think of it as the whole garment of man and imagine the soul standing bare, uncovered, naked when the body goes, whereas it is but the outer dress. Man is covered by a subtler garment within. His character, this sum total of his deeds, his thoughts, his past experiences, these are woven into a finer, more indestructible garment that continues to clothe him. His character is his real covering, and this body so thinly veils it that every change of character shines through. A face that before was heavy and lifeless will grow bright and beautiful; a body that moved slowly gains new grace, new ease and activity; senses that were dull become quick and intelligent. It is this inner body, this inner garment that is man's real dress and this he takes with him. Just as when the leaves fall, the tree draws all its sap down into the roots to prepare for a new season of activity; so man, at the dropping of his body, gathers together all his vital forces, all the fruits of his experience and draws them

down into the roots of his being to prepare for a time of new growth. As it is said in one of the Upanishads: "And as policemen, magistrates, equerries and governors gather round a king who is departing, thus do all the *pranas* (vital energies) gather round the Self at the time of death, when a man is thus going to expire . . . and he taking with him those elements of light, descends into the heart. And when he thus departs, life (the chief *prana*) departs after him and when life thus departs, all the other vital energies depart after it. Then both his knowledge and his work take hold of him, and his acquaintance with former things."

The tree, however, remains ever the same. Man moves on. Why? Because he is a conscious germ of life. A tree does not yet know its own soul, while man does. It is but the blind servant of evolution. Man is an active co-partner. We can all be co-workers with Nature. Not merely can we die and be reborn as many times as we choose, but we can determine the grades of our evolution. Why we came into this great wheel of the universe to gain experience from life to life, we shall know when we return. That question, as Swami Vivekananda says, can only be answered where it is never asked. But that we have come, that the germ of life, in a momentary independence, set out from the Absolute as an individual soul and is now making the circle, so much we know. And through eons each one of us has been travelling up and up. We are in the condition of a man who, standing on a high bluff, has plunged into the ocean with such force that it has carried him to the bottom, and he is struggling to regain the surface. So we have plunged into the ocean of duality which we call matter and are now battling to rise out of its depths and

save ourselves. We think it is our own special environment or association which so smothers and oppresses us. But it is more than that. It is the entire realm of duality, not merely the limited fragment of it where we dwell. Matter is too dense for us to live in; it is not our natural element.

We can never forget the thing that we have been. Why? Because all of this is destructible and that is indestructible. The Soul will not be forgotten. It remembers itself in us and reminds us of itself at every turn. And so we push on and on. When we would give up and go down like shipwrecked mariners, still it drives us on. We cannot relinquish the desire for life. We cannot abandon the conviction that we must live, that we cannot die. So we continue to struggle. It is this which explains the whole course of evolution. The man who dwells altogether in the external and is content to study phenomena alone, perceives Nature operating only in the realm of effects. He watches the battle of forces without understanding the cause or the purpose of it. He sees all Nature fighting, but does not know for what she is fighting or why she began the fight. He believes that the germ of life is pushed on from form to form by the pressure of environment and association. He does not perceive that within, which impels it and which is independent of all outer circumstance. It was not the pursuit of the larger fish which transformed the fins of the little fish into wings; it was the quickening of a new consciousness that life was its birthright, which under the outer pressure expressed itself in a higher material form.

It is always that something within which is the cause of growth and which utilizes the outer

condition. When we take an acorn and put it into the ground, it is not the ground or the water or the sun that makes that acorn an oak. Why is it always an oak? Why is the peach always a peach? The earth is the same, the water is the same, the sun is the same. The difference is in the seed. It has its own ideal. It has its definite course of action laid out. It has said to itself: "I shall be an oak, and any amount of earth and water and air and sunshine will never make me into anything but an oak." Thus it springs up and utilizes all of its environment to fulfill the ideal that is within itself. So has it been from the beginning.

Evolution is nothing at all but: first, a subconscious incarnation; next, a conscious but involuntary reincarnation; then a voluntary and superconscious reincarnation. Through all the subconscious stages of evolution the germ of life moves, as it were, mechanically, from the very force of the power that has dropped it into matter. It goes on, a blind slave to the laws of nature. Like a little child carried in arms, clothed and fed and housed by the mother, fulfilling the law of the mother, having no volition of its own; so the soul in this first stage, the babyhood of evolution, is carried in the arms of Mother Nature. It is she who determines what shall be its dress and food and condition. Thus guarded and directed, it grows quietly up into self-consciousness. When it reaches this second stage, that of self-consciousness, then the mother puts it down and says: "Now you must learn to be a man and take care of yourself." From that moment freedom of choice is ours. We can create our own condition and environment. But we are reluctant to grow up. We prefer to go on living like igno-

rant, irresponsible children, with no power of choice. Even though we have been given human bodies, we persist in our animal tendencies; and so we come back again and again, just as idle children are sent back to the same class in school year after year. Only when the Divine Mother has reminded us many times through thwarted desire, through bitter blows and disappointment, of our lost opportunities, do we wake up and listen to her admonition: "Give up this narrow measure of things. Do not identify yourself with this little earthly life. Know that your life is eternal. Live in that and be free."

So long as we believe that we have but one short life in which to work out our salvation, or even to satisfy our desires and ambitions, we are bound to live nervously and fearfully. There can be no calmness or majesty in our manner or behaviour. The time is too short. We must perforce be always hurried and troubled. But when we awaken to the fact that this life is not a thing in itself; that its little joys and sorrows have no independent value, but that their whole purpose is to prepare us for something bigger; at once we grow strong and brave; and the daily round of homely tasks gains new significance and dignity. Then the sorrows are just as useful to us as the joys, the disappointments serve us as well as the gratifications, since all alike are training us for the larger life. We no longer weigh experience by its effect upon us today. We measure it by its eternal effect upon us. And we seize every experience, whether painful or pleasurable, which will hasten the evolution of our soul through higher and higher forms of life. Our one concern is to take advantage of the precious opportunity, which the Most High has given us, to evolve into that

which will be as perfect as the Father in Heaven is perfect. What intense interest does life gain for us! What tremendous opportunities awaken before us! How quickly do our standards grow! To be called the man of one life seems to us an insult. We who have outlived universes! Who have transcended all time and all creation and are living in eternity today! For the man who can look at life from this height, the momentary sorrow is no more than a flash of lightning across a dark sky. There may follow the low roll of grief, but quickly the storm breaks and the sun shines again in his heart.

Already astronomy has reduced the earth to a point in space without length, breadth or magnitude. Can we not rise and reduce this little life of ours to such a speck in time? If we can, then we shall pass over every difficulty as a man walks over pebbles! We shall be able to brush aside every trouble and annoyance as a man brushes aside a cobweb! But we must not look at this life in relation to that greater life, because the nearer thing will always seem the bigger to us; let us look at that life in its relation to this, and at once this one is dwarfed and reduced to its proper proportion. Live in the consciousness of the eternal. That is the secret. Let a man fully grasp the doctrine of Reincarnation and it will help him as nothing else will, to transcend all this temporary life. It will carry him out of today into eternity, away from all that is ephemeral and fleeting into that which endures. It will make him understand that he is living as a man travels in a railroad train. The man buys his ticket here to reach his destination there. The stations along the road, what does he care about them? He is going on a journey. Even if the

journey is a hard one, he bears it, saying: "To-morrow it will be over and I shall have reached my destination." He lives not in the objects which he passes quickly on the way; his consciousness is fixed on his journey's end.

The fact of Reincarnation comes to remind us that we are travelling a mighty journey, with perfection, unending bliss, infinite knowledge, eternal life as the destination. If we think of that, if we keep that in our mind, these stations along the way, the passing events of these little lives, will scarcely count for us. They only mark the progress of the journey, and we are content to stop and equally content to go on; what happens in between does not matter. Christ said: "He who loses his life for My sake shall find it," that is, he who loses the consciousness of this small fleeting, temporal life, gains the consciousness of that one unbroken sweep of eternal life—not an eternal life in some future state, but an eternal life that we have now; for that which is eternal, infinite and indestructible must be existent at this moment.

You are living in that, and you have cut it up into little pieces, and you cling to one small fragment which you call this human life. Take it all. Do not be content with a fragment of it. Gather it all into your consciousness now. Live by that. Think of this life constantly as just one little piece of unbroken existence which is yours. Think of every little trouble and sorrow in this life as but a tiny bubble on that great stream of existence. How quickly will man transcend his griefs! How quickly will he wipe out his desires, when he grows up into the realization of what he is and what he has. It is foolish to try to wean a child away from his toys. He will cry

and cry and then get a few little sticks and a bit of string and make for himself a new toy. The only way is to expand his consciousness, to interest him in something bigger, and then he drops his toy of himself. That, too, is our only way. Keep the bigger thing constantly in mind and grow up to it.

We must seek everything possible to stimulate the evolution of our higher faculties. We must seek an association, an environment that will hasten the expansion of our consciousness. We cannot lose a single opportunity of coming into the presence of one who has awakened to the responsibility of this higher evolution, who has gone out of human embodiment into divine embodiment, even though he may still wear this human body. Every time we come into the presence of one who has transcended this merely human consciousness, we have given ourselves a push upward. Every time we neglect the opportunity, we have delayed our evolution. Every time that we take up a newspaper and idly read its columns, when perhaps we might have taken a Scripture and read one life-giving word, we have arrested our evolution. Every time that we worry and trouble over our passing trials, every time we give reality to these outer conditions that tomorrow may be gone for us, we have arrested our evolution.

Reincarnation is not counted merely from birth to birth. Every day we are re-embodied. Every night we die and the way we live today determines our embodiment of tomorrow. Have we conquered self for one instant today, tomorrow we are a bigger person. Have we given way to the little self, given way to its demands upon us, felt a greater concern for this body of flesh than

for that greater body of character, we have arrested our development. Stop and think of it. Every moment is a death and a rebirth. Are we determining these reincarnations in an ever mightier chain? Is each link bigger and stronger than the last one? Is each day's body and mind and soul-life a conscious widening and expanding of the one of the day before?

It is time that we stopped to think of this. Not only can we dwarf this little life into nothingness by thinking of infinity, but we can expand every moment of this life into eternity and infinity by gaining a consciousness of its import and possibilities. As we move along the street, as we do our daily tasks, as we pass our hours of leisure, as we study and strive, if we say to ourselves: "This moment is a part of eternity, shall I use it for infinite and eternal things or for merely finite and temporary ends?" If we do that, we shall put into every moment a thoughtfulness and wisdom which will make our life here and now, in this one birth, the completion and fulfillment of all desire, not the desire for outer things, but the fulfillment of that one supreme desire of the soul, —to attain perfection and liberation.

REPORTS

The Birthday Anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Monday, March 10th. Services began in the early morning and continued throughout the day. From four to five in the afternoon passages from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna were read and explained, after which an hour was spent in meditation and chanting. The chief public meeting of the day took place in the evening at eight.

There was a large gathering and the Swami Paramananda, after music and meditation, delivered an address in which he said in brief: What makes Sri Ramakrishna stand out from among men? Why do we pay tribute to him? Born in a remote village, of poor parents, with scarcely more than a rudimentary education, performing the modest duties of a priest in an isolated temple on the Ganges, why did the greatest minds of the times seek him out and ask to be taught of him? It was because, not content with mere book-learning, he had gone to the fountainhead and gained his knowledge first hand. He first knew, then he talked; and as a result, although he spoke the simplest language, every word he uttered was full of mightiness. In every living being there is a soul-consciousness which can only be convinced by true soul-wisdom. He who knows God has the whole treasure of this wisdom at his command, and such was the case with this great Teacher. Yet he had no desire to gain recognition. He refused to accept honor, he shrank from name and fame, because he never forgot that he was nothing but an instrument in the hands of the Divine. He came to show us how we may realize the Truth. His life was a practical illustration of one who knows. Material science there are many who can teach; but very few can teach the science of the spirit, because it requires the living of the life. Having reached the centre of things, Sri Ramakrishna was able to embrace and understand all religions, all phases of thought. He knew God so well that he could accept everything. The man who has a partial view of things, disputes, differentiates and condemns; but Sri Ramakrishna was an embodiment of universal tolerance. To him all

creeds were but different radii converging to the one centre,—God. Let a man have sincere faith and steadfast devotion and he must gain Truth, no matter what the form of religion he practises to reach it. Realization was his watchword. A man must know before he can teach or help others. He must have the badge of authority which experience alone can give. But if he dedicates his life to an ideal and serves it truly, he may die unknown, but his life will surely bring blessing to the world.

A brief address by Sister Devamata followed, after which the blessed fruits were distributed to all present.

The Talks on The Great Scriptures of India, given by Swami Paramananda at the special Sunday evening meetings through March, were greatly appreciated by all who attended them. The essential spirit and teaching of the Vedas was the subject of the first Talk; in the second, the Swami explained the difference in character and purpose between the Karma-Kanda or Work-portion of the Vedas and the Upanishads or Knowledge-portion. The third Talk was on the Ramayanam and the fourth on the Mahabharatam, the two great sacred epics of India.

The Swami sailed for Europe on March 29th. Friends are awaiting him at Naples, and his plan of work for the summer will then be definitely formed. During his absence the meetings and classes at the Vedanta Centre of Boston will be conducted by Sister Devamata. The Tuesday evening class will be devoted to the study of the Bhagavad Gita; the Talks on the Upanishads will continue at the Thursday class, which will

again meet in the afternoon at four o'clock. The Sunday Vesper Service at five o'clock will be resumed and the subjects for the lectures at the Sunday morning Service will be: April 6th, "Psychic Power and Spirituality"; April 13th, "Control of Mind through the Breath"; April 20th, "The Practice of Unselfishness"; April 27th, "Building of Character."

The Mayavati Charitable Dispensary has just issued its report for 1912. This work is carried on under the direction of the Advaita Ashrama or Peace Retreat, founded by the Swami Vivekananda in the foot-hills of the Himalayas not far from Almora, and now one of the most active centres of the Ramakrishna Mission. The Dispensary was opened nine years ago. "Situated in the midst of the Himalayan forests stretching for miles and miles and only relieved by very sparsely populated villages here and there, the value of the work done should not be gauged merely by the number of patients, but by the urgency of their demands and the extreme helplessness of their condition, which we annot emphasize too strongly here". In all 406 patients were treated; of these 316 were Hindus, 81 Mahommedans and 9 Europeans. A large donation of medicines helped much toward the care of these; and a "German friend" contributed 700 rupees (about $225) towards the general expenses, besides 1300 rupees (about $435) towards the building fund.

Swami Virajananda, in charge of the Ashrama, announces that "the construction of the permanent quarters for the Dispensary and the indoor patients has been taken in hand by clearing, levelling and

banking up a suitable site adjoining the Ashrama compound and by building the foundations". But to meet the increasing need, the original plan of a one-storied house with three rooms has been changed to a two-storied house which will contain a dispensary room, an examining room, a room for indoor patients, a room for the doctor in charge, a bath-room and also a kitchen separate from the main building, as is the usual custom in India. This will necessitate a much larger outlay, for which more funds are needed.

At the recent regular meeting of the Ramakrishna Mission Boy's Society at Madanapalli, India, the new President, Mr. Subramaniam Iyer, delivered an instructive address on the teachings of Swami Vivekananda. "Man-making," he said, was their chief import, because they showed to every human being how he could bring out the latent Divinity within him and thus realize perfection. The man who through any path of spiritual practice can perceive the Divine within him, that one becomes a free soul. At the close the President exhorted the members of the Society to keep ever before them the ideal of service preached by Swami Vivekananda and to rise above those social differences which have in recent times obscured the religious ideals of India.

Swami Vivekananda's lecture on "The Nature of the Soul and Its Goal," recently published in two numbers of The Message, has been brought out in pamphlet form and is now on sale. (Price, 10 cents; postage, 1 cent.)

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II MAY, 1913 No. 5

The whole universe exists for each one of us between the two ends of the nerves,—this outer end on the surface of the skin and the inner end in the spinal column. One part of the net-work leads us out through the channel of the eyes, another takes us out through the ears, another through the tongue, still another through the nose, and so this universe of forms and sounds, tastes and smells comes into existence. We are as it were caught in this net of the nervous system. We have entangled ourselves and we seem to like to entangle ourselves; such is the perversity of our nature. But only when we extricate ourselves from this labyrinth of nerves can we hope to be free. And there is a process by which we can escape. This process is called Yoga; and we can get out by Raja-Yoga, or Jnana, or Karma, or Bhakti. When we have got out and are free, then we shall see that this universe is all God's play. So long as we are caught in the net of the nerves, life seems a serious thing; and it is serious. That we were strong and now we are weak; that we were rich and now we are poor; to us these are undoubtedly facts, and so long as they are facts to us, we shall have to believe them. But as Ashtavarka says: "If even at this moment you

can throw off this idea of the body, then at this very moment you will be free." When that comes, we shall not need a new entertainment to make us happy, for we shall be happiness itself; we shall not go about seeking knowledge of this or that, for we shall realize that we ourselves are infinite wisdom; we shall not have to follow the rules of hygiene to keep up life, for we shall know that we are life itself.

Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

The Yogi (or aspirant who seeks to commune with God) wishes to realize the Universal Soul. His object is by self-control to bring the finite human soul into communion with the Infinite Soul. He tries first to put together his mind, which lies scattered through running after the world of the senses; he then seeks to fix it on the Universal Soul. . . . But the path of communion by love, devotion and self-surrender to God is the easiest of all paths. The Lord loves his devotee and will vouchsafe unto him even the knowledge of the Absolute if he hungers and thirsts after it.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

And as soon as a man turneth himself in spirit, and with his whole heart and mind entereth into the mind of God which is above time, all that ever he hath lost is restored in a moment. And if a man were to do thus a thousand times in a day, each time a fresh and real union would take place; and in this sweet and divine work standeth the

truest and fullest union that may be in this present time. For he who hath attained thereto, asketh nothing further, for he hath found the Kingdom of Heaven and Eternal Life on earth.

—*Theologia Germanica.*

Now what most contributes to the growth of these wings (of the soul) is meditation, by which we learn little by little to wean our affections from earthly things, and to get a habit of contemplating the things that are immaterial and intelligible, and to shake off the pollutions it has contracted by its union with the terrestrial and mortal body. And, indeed, by these advantages it revives in some manner, it rouses up itself, it is filled with divine vigor and reunites itself to the Intelligent Perfection within.

—*Hierocles.*

Christ saith "See." Three things are required by him who would see supernaturally in interior exercises. The first is the light of the divine grace. . . . The second is a stripping off of extraneous images and a denudation of the heart, so that a man may be free from images and attachments to every creature. The third is a free conversion of the will, by means of a concentration of all the bodily and spiritual faculties, and complete deliverance from all inordinate affections. Thus this will flows together in the unity of the Godhead and of our own mind, so that the reasonable creature may be able to obtain and possess supernaturally the sublime unity of God.

—*Ruysbroeck.*

And there is, further, the most Divine Knowledge of Almighty God, which is known, through not knowing (agnosia) during the union above mind; when the mind, having stood apart from all existing things, then having dismissed also itself, has been made one with the super-luminous rays, thence and there being illuminated by the unsearchable depth of wisdom.

—*Dionysius the Areopagite.*

This is the rule for achieving it (concentration on the object of contemplation): restraint of the breath, restraint of the senses, meditation, fixed attention, investigation, absorption (in the object of search), these are called the six-fold Yoga. When by this Yoga he beholds the gold-colored Maker, the Lord, the Person, Brahman, the Cause, then the sage, leaving behind good and evil, makes everything (breath, organs of sense, body, etc.) to be one in the Highest Indestructible.

Through the practice of Yoga a man obtains contentment, power to endure good and evil, and tranquility. . . . If a man practises Yoga for six months and is thoroughly free (from the outer world), then the perfect Yoga (union), which is endless, high, and hidden, is accomplished.

—*Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad.*

The spirit which is truly sanctified attains to so lofty a degree that all which it sees is real, all which it desires is granted, and in all which it commands, it is obeyed. —*Avicenna.*

THE TRUE MEANING OF YOGA

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Unless the mind can be subdued, unless a man can claim his mind as his own and not be dragged hither and thither by his uncontrolled nature, he cannot manifest his true power. One side of us is holy, is divine; and whenever we touch that side consciously or unconsciously, that is the state of illumination, the state of highest happiness. Who can attain this state? One who has conquered his passions and who works with decision and steadiness in the spiritual path.

We all have infinite power, infinite capacity for higher things; but how are we to find it out? Not by going outside. We must turn all our forces within and discover the source of our being. We can never be content with the physical alone. That satisfies only our animal nature. Having an intellectual grasp of some theory also cannot give us permanent satisfaction. We must have something higher than reason. So we pass through many experiences, pushing on and on, until there comes to us the longing to go to the fountain-head; then religion begins.

The method by which we go to the fountain-head is called Yoga. This science is very old, but there is nothing mysterious or horrible about it. The name is derived from the Sanskrit root *Yug*. It is the same word as the English "Yoke," signifying "to join"; and Yoga means joining the lower self with the higher Self. This union must take place before man can attain perfection. What it means is nothing but practical spirituality. Theory is all well enough. We hear about many wonderful things: but how to gain them? The practical side is necessary. Some one may come and tell us about the soul, about realization, about

God-vision; but only when we take up religion and practise it, can we know whether what he says is true.

Mere talking or playing with books is not religion. We must practise; and the Yogis are those who have practised, who have come face to face with the higher problems of life and have solved them. But they know that a man must begin where he stands; so they take him just where he is. When I talk of the superconscious state and you only know the physical state, you cannot understand. Therefore the Yogi starts with the gross body, goes on to the senses, then to the mind, and gradually works up to man's finer nature. As he rises the problems become more and more interesting. He first considers how to attain health and tranquility of body, because so long as the body is unhealthy and restless, we cannot turn our thoughts to higher things. Health means a state of balance, and a healthy body is one about which we do not have to think. When we can forget it, then we are able to accomplish something.

The mind, however, has so much to do with the body that we must also pay attention to mental health. Fickleness, unsteadiness, depression, doubt, these indicate an unhealthy condition of mind. Only when we can bring this mind into a state of equilibrium, of harmony, can we focus it; and not until it is focused do we see how powerful it is. When the mind is scattered, dissipated, then it is weak and cannot be in a healthy condition. We are now restless because our mind is scattered; but when we have succeeded in centralizing our mental energies, then we shall have mental equilibrium and only then will our mind be truly healthy.

Concentrating the mind is also Yoga, because it

is joining the mind together, binding one part to another. When one part is claimed by one thing and another part is claimed by something else, the mind must be weak; but when we collect all these parts and unite them into one whole, then it becomes strong—like a stout cord made up of many fine threads. All these little thoughts must be gathered together; then instead of weakening us, they will bring us great strength. Many people think that they have not the power of concentration; but the great Seers declare to every man: "You have an inexhaustible reservoir of strength and health and life in you." You must however strive to realize it, to discover it for yourself. Unless you try to help yourself, who can help you? Determination is necessary. Again and again we read in the Scriptures that truth is never attained by a weak person. We must gather up all our physical and mental forces and direct them through the right channel.

Gaining health and strength of body and mind is the first step. But the ethical nature has a great effect on the mind, so moral health is also necessary. Therefore the Yogis tell us we must practise purity, cleanliness, non-killing, truthfulness, contentment, non-stealing, continence, self-control. Even if we have acquired physical and mental health, we cannot do anything until we have self-control. One who is constantly dragged here and there by desires has no peace. But he who thinks to get rid of desires by satisfying them will never succeed. That is only like pouring oil on flame. We are born with certain tendencies; are we to let these drag us on and create conditions for us? No; we must counteract past habits of thought. To do this different methods have been developed and these methods go by the name of Yogas.

Yoga means the path by which one attains communion with God. The first step is to have concentration. It is very difficult to realize anything unless we have subdued the mind. If we want to gain any knowledge in the spiritual realm, we have to collect our forces; and this comes most quickly by having intense love for an Ideal. When we have whole-hearted love for an Ideal, we can go faster. If we do not have this, it requires more time. Yoga means joining oneself with the Ideal and this joining takes place most easily through love. When we love anything intensely, we strive to be united with that. Hence earnest-heartedness and intense devotion to the Ideal bring union very quickly.

There are various paths through which this union may be effected. First there is Karma Yoga or the Path of Work. Every one must work; and work always produces some result, either good or bad. Yet everyone desires good results. The way to gain good results is to work without self-interest. Each time we do something unselfishly, we are practising Karma Yoga. "To work we have the right, but not to the fruits thereof." This is a discouraging idea to some people. They say: Why should we work, if we are not to enjoy the fruits? But when a man works, counting the results he is to gain, if he does not earn that, he is disappointed. When, however, he works for work's sake, out of love for the work itself, even if he does not gain the desired result, he does not suffer any reaction. Each one of us is a part of a mighty power. We are here doing our share of a universal work. We are caring for our friends, for our family because they are God's. We may not have a special time for worship; but when we work without self-interest,

every act becomes an act of worship—in our office, in our home, wherever we are. If we can work in this way, each one of us will become a mighty character and will make both ourself and others happy. This is Karma Yoga.

To gain knowledge of the spirit through the control of body and mind is the aim of Raja Yoga. To do this we must go step by step. We begin by controlling the body. Then we learn to withdraw our senses from sense objects. Next we withdraw the mind from the senses, and when we have done this, we must learn to control the mind. So we go from grosser to finer, from the subtle to still subtler things, until we find the subtlest thing of all, our own spirit. But this cannot be done so long as the mind is scattered. Now our thoughts are broken up into many little lights; but when we can unite all these little lights, we get one powerful light that illumines the whole being. To thus master our thought and make it carry us to realization is what we learn in Raja Yoga. Thought is a living force and our actions are expressions of our thought. The man who has control over his thoughts never makes mistakes; one who has not control makes mistakes at every step. Thoughts are seeds; so if we can control our thought, we can control our actions in the seed form. To do this, however, we must learn to discriminate between the real and the unreal, the true and the false.

The practice of discrimination is the lesson taught by Jnana Yoga or the Path of Wisdom. Now we are clinging to all these things around us, but some day we wake up and ask: "I am clinging to these things, but are they permanent? Can they bring me permanent happiness?" Then we begin to study their nature and we come to

realize that they are transitory and therefore unreal. One after another we put them aside, saying, "Not this, Not this;" and hence this is sometimes called the path of *"Neti, Neti,"* "Not this, not this." Just as when we enter a dark room to find something, we go from one object to another, saying, "Not this," and again, "Not this;" so a man passes from one object of this world to another, until he finds the real and the permanent.

Bhakti Yoga is the Path of Devotion. This is the path which Christ taught so wonderfully. Love is the strongest uniting power and when this love is turned towards God, it brings about the state of oneness with the "Father in heaven," which He enjoyed. It is the easiest and most natural path to follow. We all have love in our hearts, and if we learn how to direct this love properly, it will lead us to the highest goal, God. But love for earthly things does not mean Bhakti. True religion begins with love for the Supreme Lord. When we have this love, we can never hate anything, for love loves everything. So long as selfishness lingers in our heart, love for non-essentials will dwell in our mind. But when we have conquered our selfish desires and our attachment for earthly, material things, and have turned our thoughts to the Supreme Lord, the Master of our heart, the Beloved, then we become united with Him and find eternal rest and satisfaction.

These are the different paths laid down to suit different individual tendencies; but we need to follow all, if we would become perfect. Only when all four sides of our nature are awakened do we attain realization. Love is like the oil that smooths the road. Wisdom is necessary at every step. Without it we constantly make mistakes. And we can do no great work without self-control.

But when we have self-control, love and wisdom, then we can see and understand all sides of the universe. Yoga means the practice and development of all these together. There is nothing secret about it. What we call mystery is what is hidden from us through our own ignorance and so we fear it. But the man of knowledge fears nothing. So long as we merely talk of religion, how can we know anything? How can we know until we live the life? We cannot understand Christ unless we become great through the practice of His teaching. A practical man, a sincere genuine character, directs all his efforts towards the practice of methods, towards living the life. Then he learns what true religion is. If you are tired of theory, of merely hearing about religion, do not give it up; but begin to practise and find out about it for yourself.

All the experiences we go through, all the lessons we learn, are only for this, to gain realization of God. Mere learning and study, mere going to churches or temples will not make us religious. Yoga means the practical application of different methods of spiritual development to our life. This system is not new. It has been practised in all ages by all the Seers of Truth. Christ was a Yogi because He practised communion with God. Buddha also was a Yogi because he practised control of the lower self. The whole aim and goal of Yoga is to find our immortal nature, to gain communion with God, to "know the Truth," and become free.

But when one has attained this, it does not mean that his usefulness is over, that he becomes absorbed in his realization and forgets everything else. On the contrary, he is the only one who can do for his fellow-man. Others may talk of

doing good; but until they reach realization, they cannot really help anyone. A man of great understanding alone can sympathize with others, can feel for others. Only one who has gone through great suffering himself is able to know another's pain; so he alone who has passed through the lower stages of development and risen above them, can understand and sympathize with those who are still struggling through those lower stages. As long as we are self-centred, as long as we are concerned for our own growth and for our own welfare, it is impossible for us to do much for the develpment or welfare of our fellow-beings. Only when our own inner nature is satisfied can we give something to others.

Mighty beings tell us that what we have accomplished in life is nothing. All that the great Seers have realized, they do not ask us merely to believe; they challenge us, they call upon us to try to realize the same for ourselves. They say, the state of Christhood, of Buddahood, this is not the exclusive property of certain individuals. It is possible for all. Not, it is true, for those who live on this plane alone. No; but for those who have transcended it. We must work for it, however; as we have to work for everything. We must also want it; and when we really want it, we will work for it. If a bag of gold is in one room and a thief in the next, he will not rest until he has got possession of the gold. Similarly, when we know the real value of that which is to be gained by religious practice or by living the life, we shall be restless to attain it. The first thing is to find out what we need for our spiritual life. The Yogis have found this out; so they ask us to follow these methods or Yogas, if

we would achieve tangible results. Those who do not practise, who merely theorize about religion, never get any results and so they cannot know about the spiritual realm; because results only come through practice. But those who are earnest, sincere and who work with determination are sure to attain. We must, however, be sensible and observe moderation in all our efforts. The Bhagavad Gita tells us: "The practice of Yoga is not for him who eats too much or who does not eat at all, nor for him who sleeps too much or keeps awake (in excess). He who is moderate in eating and recreation, in his efforts in work, moderate in sleep and wakefulness, (his practice of) Yoga becomes the destroyer of all misery."

The Yogi does not ask us to give up or destroy any part of our nature. He asks us to collect all our energies and use them in the best possible way. Yoga means living the life consciously, learning to utilize all our forces wisely; because if not wisely utilized, they will create bondage. The adjustment and use of all things with proper understanding, this is Yoga; and this Yoga must lead to practical union with the Supreme. Wherever there is any suggestion of union, that is Yoga; and union means strength. A man may begin with the union of external forces, but this will lead him to the knowledge and mastery of his inner forces; so he goes deeper and deeper within until he reaches the Self; and direct connection with the Self destroys all weakness. He who, through the practice of Yoga, subdues his passions and gains a tranquil mind, becomes one with the Supreme and attains infinite bliss.

REPORTS

The work at the Vedanta Centre of Boston continued as usual through April, the attendance remaining about the same as in previous months. At the Tuesday Class, the Bhagavad-Gita was taken as the text book; and on Thursday, passages from the Upanishads were explained. The Sunday lectures layed special stress on the development of the spiritual consciousness as the first duty of every thoughtful man and woman. In no other way could the present status of society be improved. No evil can be remedied on the plane where it occurs. It can be successfully dealt with only from the plane above. Thus giving fuel and clothes will never eliminate poverty; knowledge is the only permanent cure. And the evils arising from partial knowledge can be met only by a fuller knowledge. Raising the general standard of secular education may have bettered social conditions in many ways; but it has also created certain new evils, which can be eradicated only by a still higher education,—that of the spiritual faculties of man. Therefore, everyone who has the welfare of his fellow-beings at heart, should feel this as compulsory for himself as is a primary schooling for each child of the community. No character can be complete or stable that stops on the ethical plane. Man's relation to man is not the ultimate problem. It rests on a still higher problem,—man's relation to God or the Final Cause. Whenever a man penetrates to the causal realm and touches the origin of things, he becomes a powerful factor in the world's life; so it is that our scientific discoverers and inventors, our religious and social seers, our poets or great artists—all those who work from the plane of inspiration, are the mighty men of society; while the influence of those who touch the Final Cause of all

things, the influence of a Christ or a Buddha, rolls down the ages, transforming and regenerating whole nations. If, then, we would do our own little part in the upliftment of humanity, there is but one way,—through the systematic development of our higher faculties, by which we shall gain knowledge of our own Divine nature and of the Supreme Source of the universe. This is the only true practice of unselfishness. The ignorant man is always a menace to society. In the morally-ignorant we recognize a greater danger than in the merely unlettered; and since the subtler spiritual faculties are still more powerful, then the spiritually-ignorant must be the most dangerous of all. He who does not understand the mighty forces that are at work within him, who has not covered and mastered the whole field of his consciousness, is like a child carrying a loaded fire-arm; no one can estimate the harm he may unwittingly do. Social responsibility therefore implies spiritual responsibility; and he is doing the greatest service to humanity who is going to school in the spirit and through systematic training is unfolding his higher understanding.

During May, the Classes on Tuesday and Thursday will continue as before at 8 P. M. On Sunday there will be the usual two Services, at 11 A. M. and 5 P. M. The daily Devotional Service will be discontinued. The subjects for the Sunday morning lectures will be: The Science of Yoga; Attainment through Work (Karma-Yoga); Concentration and Meditation (Raja-Yoga); and The Path of Devotion (Bhakti-Yoga). All the meetings will be conducted by Sister Devamata—since the Swami Paramananda is now in Europe.

The 8th Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Stu-

dents Home at Mylapore, Madras, gives a most encouraging review of that excellent work. The fact that there were two hundred applications to fill seven vacancies leaves no doubt as to the usefulness and need of the institution; and it undoubtedly offers exceptional advantages to poor students. The age limits are 13 to 23; and those who are admitted receive not only their board and lodging, but also clothes, school books and when necessary tuition; although nearly all of them obtain scholarships. They are allowed to attend any school or college in Madras and everything is done to push them on in their studies. If they do not maintain a high standing in their classes they are forced to withdraw from the Home and give place to more diligent boys; and five were dismissed on that account this year. According to the present report, 2 of the students at the Presidency College stood 2nd and 8th in a large class; two other boys are in the B. A. classes of the Madras Christian College, and five are at Pachaiyappa's and Wesleyan colleges. All the others are attending different high schools. Compulsory classes for the study of short-hand, typewriting and business methods are held in the Home; and the students who applied for the Elementary Test in short-hand all passed in the first class, one heading the list. In the Theory and Practice of Commerce it was also one of the Home boys who stood first. Religious instruction is made an integral part of the daily work and the students "are encouraged to lead a life of strict discipline." The Swami in charge of the Ramakrishna Mission in Madras, of which the Home is a branch, holds a special class weekly for them, besides which a course of Vedic study is followed in the Home.

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Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. JUNE, 1913 NO. 6

All men are not ready for the Truth. Some minds are like baby minds. They cannot grasp anything abstract; they cannot see beyond the physical plane. In order to attain the Truth, one must learn to discriminate the real from the unreal, one must give up all desire for the fruits of action and have perfect control over the mind and senses. The moment we give way to the senses, our mind becomes confused. They are like thieves; if we follow them, they will steal away our treasure and everything will be lost.

Infinite Truth exists within ourselves; but we cannot see It, because we have covered our mind with the veil of ignorance. We have put the limited thing which we call our ego in the place of the unlimited or God. So we are deluded and we forget about Truth. But Truth does not forget us. It continues to exist whether we recognize It or not. Where was the law of gravity before Newton discovered it? It was not in the apple or in the atmosphere; the real discovery was in Newton's own mind. A blind man cannot see the sun, but

the sun does not cease to shine. So it is with God or Truth. As Sri Ramakrishna used to say: "You see many stars at night in the sky but find them not when the sun rises; can you say that there are no stars in the heaven of day? So, O man, because you behold not God in the days of your ignorance, say not that there is no God."

Truth is that by which we know all things. Where the mind cannot reach, where the senses cannot go, that which is beyond these is Truth. Different people give It different names and define It in different ways, but It is always one and the same Truth. Two persons go to the same place and come back with entirely opposite points of view, but we know that the difference is in them. So with Truth. Each sees It according to his development, hence each one gives a different interpretation of It. In the same way, we are all children of one God, but some do not know it and others do.

No Truth can be Truth for us until we have realized It. First It appeals to our mind, then to our heart, then It fills our whole being. But only when It becomes a part of us, do we fully realize It. Therefore those who wish to be genuine seekers must dive deep into the realm of Truth; they must prove all things for themselves; that is the only way of illumination. So long as ignorance blinds us, we cannot perceive the Truth. Let us therefore struggle to tear off the veil of ignorance and get the light. Then when the veil is torn off and we are in the light, we shall see everything clearly and enjoy real peace and bliss.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

He is the one God hidden in all beings, All-pervading, the Self within all beings, watching over all works, dwelling in all beings, the Witness, the Perceiver, the only One, free from qualities. He makes all, He knows all, the Self-caused, the Knower, the Time of time, Who assumes qualities and knows everything, the Master of nature and man. —*Svetasvatara-Upanishad.*

There is one Eternal God, the Cause of all things. He is the Divine Mind, the Infinite Wisdom, who brought matter out of chaos into order, and produced the world we see. —*Anaxagoras.*

There is no God but God, the ever-living. . . To Him belongeth the heavens and the earth, and all that they contain. . . He knoweth the past and the future; but no one comprehends anything of His knowledge, except that which He revealeth. His sway extends over the heavens and the earth, and it is no burden to Him to sustain them both. He is the High, the Mighty One. . . . —*Koran.*

There are neither two gods, nor three, nor four, nor ten. He is One and only One and pervades the whole universe. All other things live, move and have their existence in Him.

—*Atharva-Veda.*

Amid all the conflicts of opinions, there sounds through all the world one consenting law and idea: that there is one God, the King and Father of all; and there are many gods who are His children . . . . I do not blame the variety of representations; only let men understand there is but One

Divine Nature. Let them love One and keep One in their thoughts. —*Maximus Tyrius.*

Thee do I invoke, God, Truth, in whom and by whom and through whom are all things true which are true; God, Wisdom, in whom and by whom and through whom are all wise who are wise: God, true and perfect Life, in whom and by whom and through whom those live who do truly and perfectly live: God, Blessedness, in whom and by whom and through whom all are blessed who are blessed. —*St. Augustine.*

I take refuge with that self-created One, in Whom is established this (universe), from Whom it has sprung, by Whom it has been created, and Who Himself constitutes it, and Who is distinct from cause and effect.

Salutation unto Thee, Who art the Cause of all, Who art Thyself causeless, Who dost constitute the wondrous Cause of all creation; Who art the Mighty Ocean, the Bestower of emancipation, and the great Refuge of all creatures.

—*Srimad-Bhagavata.*

The more the self, the I, the me, the mine, that is, self-seeking and selfishness, abate in a man, the more doth God's I, that is, God himself, increase in him. —*Theologica Germanica.*

It is the wise who say always: "It is Thou, it is Thou, O Lord!" but the ignorant and the self-deluded say: "It is I, it is I." The perfect liberation of the soul is within the reach of him alone who, being convinced that God is the Disposer of all things, hath learnt the lesson of complete self-abnegation and absolute forgetfulness of "I," "Me" and "mine." —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE COMMON BASIS OF ALL RELIGIONS

By Swami Ramakrishnananda

(Talk given to some Mohammedan students who took refuge in the monastery during a storm, hence the reference to the Semitic idea of a Satan. The young men were so much interested in what the Swami had to say, that they returned every evening for a week to have him expound to them the tenets of their own religion.)

The ideal of all religions is God, God alone. As different rivers, taking their birth in different places, all flow toward the one ocean, so every religion leads to God. In whatever religion a man belongs, he has to worship the one God. According to the Semitic belief, whatever is not God, is called Satan. The two existences are God and anti-God. What is Satan? If we want to know what Satan is, it is very easy for us; but it is very difficult for us to know what God is. What then is Satan? That which makes me forget my God. And what is that? The ego. The ego makes me forget the Lord and believe that all these things belong to me. So what in Judaism, Christianity and Mohammedanism they call Satan, in Vedanta we call ego or selfishness. All ideas of "I," "me" and "mine" are Satanic, because they are based on ignorance and put the ego in the place of the Lord of the whole universe. Therefore some philosophers declare that ignorance is Satan and wisdom is God, for it is always ignorance which leads a man to doubt the existence of God. "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God."

It is only out of vanity that men deny the existence of God. Such people make much of the ego and think that the human mind can unravel the mysteries of the universe; but it is as absurd to suppose that this puny mind can understand the workings of the Lord as that an ant can lift up

the Himalayas and plunge them into the Bay of Bengal. This human mind by itself is so weak, so slavish in its nature, that we cannot imagine anything weaker or more helpless. Does it remember what it thought or did last week, or last month, or when it was five years old? Has it the power to go beyond this universe? No. Then it is subject to all sorts of temptations. It is led away by anything and everything in the outside world. Can it always even keep itself awake? No, it is often and often overpowered by sleep. It is also like a monkey, with no power to keep quiet even for a moment. For this reason, one of the greatest warriors of India has said that the mind is so unsteady and tumultuous that to curb it is more difficult than to curb the wind. What is the meaning of restlessness? Weakness. It is the weak man who is restless. The weaker a thing, the more it is restless; the stronger it is, the calmer and steadier is it. A little plant bends and quivers at the slightest breeze, but the Himalayas remain unmoved in the fiercest storm. Therefore this constant restlessness of the mind shows its weakness, its flimsiness.

How precarious too is the life of this body! I am talking here at this moment, then suddenly I may stop, my body will become stiff and people will say that I am dead. Having such a body to call my own, having such a mind to call my own, how can I be vain and proud? That man must be absolutely in the hands of Satan who makes much of this body and mind; or who thinks this body and mind to be his own property. Neither the mind belongs to me, nor the body. To whom then do they belong? They must belong to Him from whom they come. I am evidently not

my own master. If I were, I could stay here as long as I chose; but the moment God calls, I must go away and leave parents, relatives, property, all that I care for. So nothing is mine. "Nothing belongs to me, all is Thine, O Lord!" This is true wisdom. "All is mine," is Satanic; "All is Thine," is of God. This every religion teaches.

The essential parts of all religions are the same. It is only in the non-essential parts that differences are to be found. Therefore we need not find fault with other religions on account of their differences in external manners. That which makes up the external is the shell side; it is always rough and hard and difficult to break, but it has one advantage, it preserves the kernel. Religion may be defined as "giving God his due." God alone is the proprietor of the universe. He alone is the proprietor of me, the proprietor of you; recognizing this and giving up all to Him is religion. Wishing to keep all for oneself is irreligion. Throw away the idea of "me" and "mine;" give up all to God: this is the essential of every religion. This is what Mohammedanism teaches, what Christianity teaches, what Vedanta teaches, what every religion teaches.

Human nature is all the same. Only dresses differ. What is in the dress? You may wear a coat and trousers, I may wear this one simple cloth; but underneath, the nature is all the same. Naked I came from my mother's womb and naked I shall go away again. But behind all dress, all ceremonies and religious rites is this one idea,—to realize God. Christian, Mahommedan, Hindu, all are striving for this. Jnana-Marga, Bhakti-Marga, Karma-Yoga, Raja-Yoga (the paths of wisdom, devotion, work and self-control) all lead to this.

To realize God is consciously or unconsciously the aim of every man. He may seem to be drawn away by a beautiful face, by sense-pleasure or ambition, but he will never find satisfaction until he has reached God. This too is the common basis of all true ethics; for all that takes man to God is morality, and all that takes man away from God is immorality.

In the realm of law, however, there is religious law and there is social law, and we must discriminate between them. God commands us to punish those who disobey Him. Why should we punish them? To make them obedient servants. But Christ says: When a man strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other. Is this not a contradiction? No. The one is a religious law, the other a social law. The one is meant for those who have given up the world; the other for the householder, who must punish the wrong-doer to protect society.

A man who wants nothing but God, if someone asks him for his house, he will say: "Yes, take it. I do not want it." But that is only possible for a man who is a *Sannyasin,* who has given up the world and all worldly ties; not for one who has a family and still wishes to live in the world. If a householder should practise such non-resistance, there would be general depredation, the good would be destroyed and the wicked would prevail. Punishment is not a bad thing. If you have done something which helps to rectify a man, you have done good to him. We should not let the wicked thrive. In a field there are always weeds, but if you want to reap a good harvest you must pull them out. Yet it must not be done in a revengeful or malicious spirit based on egotism. Satan always wants to revenge. God sent Satan out of

heaven because he was not worthy to remain there, but He was not angry with him. The attitude of God towards Satan is always pity; the attitude of Satan towards God is that of revenge, jealousy, hatred. Those are always Satanic who are revengeful or destructive, for vengeance is based on egotism, on the seeing of difference; and the seeing of difference is ignorance, the seeing of sameness is knowledge. This is equally true of those who persecute in the name of religion, as of those who fight or kill for worldly gain. Vedanta says that a good Jew, a good Christian, a good Mohammedan and a good Hindu are all the same, for they are all faithful servants of the Lord. In whatever country they may live, they are equally God's servants. As Sri Krishna teaches in the Gita: "Whoever seeks me by whatever method, of him do I make the faith firm and unwavering." And again: "Howsoever do men resort to me, even so do I serve them. My dear son, know that all paths have been marked out by me." This is Vedanta. The God of Vedanta was not discovered by Buddha. He was not discovered by Christ. He was not discovered by Mohammed. He is revealing Himself throughout all ages. He has revealed Himself throughout the beginningless past, and He will continue to reveal Himself throughout the endless future.

Truth cannot be fashioned. Truth is one and the same; it is immutable. Truth is above the power of death; it is omnipresent, eternal and most glorious. Truth will still remain even though heaven and earth pass away. There are not many different Truths in the world, for Truth is one and the same at all times and in every place. . .

—*Gospel of Buddha.*

THE ETHICS OF VEDANTA

Extract from Lecture by Swami Saradananda

The universe according to the Vedanta is one indivisible whole. It is by mistake that we think ourselves separate from the rest of the world. In the external world our bodies represent so many different points in the one vast ocean of matter, in which there is no break. Behind that lies expanded the one universal ocean of mind, in which our minds but represent so many different whirlpools; and behind that still is the Soul, the Self, the Atman, the store-house of all knowledge, power and bliss. So though there is but one Soul shining above, there are so many millions of reflections on the millions of whirlpools in the mental ocean; and these reflections are nothing but so many individual egos. Therefore when a man raises himself to the super-conscious, he sees the One Sun that is shining above the mental ocean and he knows that he is not a particular reflection, but the Sun itself, that has given rise to all the reflections in the ocean of fine matter called the mind. And where lies the basis of all ethics? In the fact that I am one with and not separate from the universe, that in injuring you I injure myself, in loving you I love myself. In the fact that behind this manifold diversity there is unity, or as the Vedantist says, behind these names and forms there is that one eternal, unchangeable ocean of Knowledge and Bliss which is our real nature. "This universe has been projected out of that ocean of bliss absolute." That Divine is trying to manifest itself through all these names and forms, and the evolution of nature into higher and higher forms is caused by this struggle of the Divine within to manifest itself better and better. Or, as Patanjali says in his Yoga

Aphorisms, "The change of one species into another is by the infilling of nature."

Every form or organism is a conduit through which that Divine is trying to manifest; and all that we need to do is to remove the barriers, which obstruct this flow of the Infinite within. With every act of love and sympathy, every performance of duty, every observance of morality, man is trying to go beyond himself by feeling himself one with the universe. He is abnegating his lower self, and does not in this self-abnegation lie the basis of all ethics? Examine all the ethical codes which the world has ever produced and you will find this one great fact taught,—to live up to the higher self by denying the lower. Consciously or unconsciously every code of ethics is leading to that. They may not give you adequate reasons why a man shall be moral and deny himself, but are we not thinking according to the laws of logic in every act of reasoning, though we may not have read a single page of logic? The Vedanta supplies the reason why we should be moral, why we should do good to others, why we should love all humanity as ourselves. Behind all these varied codes of ethics lurks that one great truth that we are one with the universe. He who lives up to that one central truth has truly renounced himself. He who does not know this truth but tries to become a perfectly moral man, in thought, word and deed, he too is unconsciously living up to that truth.

This word renunciation has got a very bad name now-a-days. Yet every religion has enforced it. It is the corner-stone upon which all religions, all ethics have been built. Nay, we are practising it every day of our lives consciously or unconsciously. A man loves his wife, his children, his country:

what is he doing all the time? Is he not renouncing himself? True renunciation, which every religion teaches, does not consist in isolating oneself from every thing and every being, but in expanding oneself more and more widely, embracing the whole of the universe in oneself by love. For, not in isolation or contraction, but in expansion, consist life and progress. This is the teaching of the Vedanta.

Examining the different standards of ethics in different countries and different religions, we find that they vary from one another in many particulars. Take the general principles and they are all almost one and the same; but go to the particulars and you will find them differing from one another more and more widely, so that often what is regarded as moral in one country is not regarded so in another. What makes this difference? Does the Vedanta give any answer to it? Yes. In order to understand this we shall have to examine a little what the Sankhya says about the origin of the cosmos, and the more developed explanation of the Vedanta which supplements it.

Maya, or Prakriti, or the creative principle of Iswara, the Ruler, is made up of the harmonious and even flow of the three qualities: Satwa (equilibrium and effulgence), Rajas (activity), and Tamas (dullness and density). This even flow is disturbed at the beginning of the cycle, when creation starts afresh, and the three begin to act upon one another. They produce first the Prana (cosmic or primal energy) and the Akasa (primal matter). Then the Prana begins to act upon the Akasa and produces or evolves, first the mental ocean (or the universal consciousness) and the individual whirlpools (which represent the individual minds).

Then out of this mental ocean is evolved the gross ocean of matter and the gross individual forms. So that as individual whirlpools in the ocean of mind and as gross manifestations, we shall always vary. Look at the particular differentiations and you will never find any two of them exactly alike. Nothing which is true for one mind exactly fits another. But there is unity behind the diversity, there is a centre to all these radii. Grasp it and you grasp the whole thing.

What is law then? It is the method or manner in which our minds grasp and connect a series of mental phenomena. It is also internal and not external; and what is known as general or universal laws, such as gravitation, etc., which apply to all individual minds, are the methods by which our minds connect themselves with one another and with the whole of this mental ocean. These universal laws are also relative, and apply only to those minds which are in the same degree of vibration, or, in other words, in the same plane of existence. But to beings whose minds represent matter in a different degree of vibration, these laws will not hold good. They have different laws for their plane of existence, different methods by which they perceive the connection between themselves and the whole mental ocean. So we see if we pay attention to particulars, we shall find that every particular differentiation has its own laws. If we rise a little higher in generalization, we shall find different laws for different planes of existence; and when we rise to the highest, to the Ultimate Unity, we go beyond the province of all law; for how can there be any law where there is no differentiation, no two, not even the subject and the object? There the law-maker, the law, and the

objects of law become one, and this is the highest point of evolution. Law is only possible in the realm of relativity.

This wonderful system of ethics, and philosophy of ethics, was not built in a day. It must have taken ages for the Hindu mind to evolve it. It is very difficult to determine the exact date when it was found out. But this at least can be said, that the Hindus were the first to discover it; and from the day of its foundation, it has helped and still is helping almost all the great religions of the world. It influenced Buddhism, the first missionary religion of the world, directly. Through the Gnostics and the Alexandrians, it influenced Greek philosophy. It is said that Pythagoras went to India and the influence of Hindu ethics is distinctly traceable in his doctrines. And lastly this system of ethics influenced directly or indirectly Zoroastrianism and Christianity.

(*Reprinted from "Lectures, Literary and Religious."*)

REPORTS

Various letters received from Switzerland tell us of the work which the Swami Paramananda has been doing there. During his stay in Gryon he saw many of the students who followed his classes so faithfully last year, some coming from neighboring towns to see him. He was next urged to go to Geneva, where, as one letter reads, "he stayed during ten days, giving daily talks on Vedanta to an earnest seeking audience. At the classes there were never less than 24 and sometimes the attendance rose to nearly 50. This was very good for an audience, the greater part of which did not un-

derstand English, but was satisfied and pleased to come under his peaceful and illumining influence, till at the end a short translation of what he had said was given in French. Nine talks were given in this way, one public lecture and one parlor-talk, which was one of the most pleasant, counting among the invited guests several professors of the University of Geneva, among whom may be named Professor Flournoy and Professor Oltramare, the well-known Orientalist. The questions and answers after the talk were especially much appreciated. On the 5th of May there was held an evening meeting of people who were really interestd, to discuss the desirability of forming a permanent group for the study of Vedanta. About 18 people expressed their desire to join, so it was decided that they would meet regularly once a week for study and meditation. There was quite a large call for books and pamphlets on Vedanta. The Swami left yesterday (the 9th. of May) for Gryon, where after a few days of rest, he will go to Paris."

* * *

The work at the Boston Vedanta Centre continued as usual through May, with two Services and a lecture on Sunday and classes on Tuesday and Thursday. The attendance was good at all. After the first of June the Sunday Vesper Service will be discontinued, but the other meetings will remain the same.

* * *

According to the last quarterly reports of the various charitable institutions carried on by the Ramakrishna Mission in India, we learn that at the Sevashrama or Hospital at Vrindavan 1393 patients were cared for during the 3 months under review; while at the Ramakrishna Home of Ser-

vice at Benares the number of cases treated was 3137, besides which 80 helpless widows were supplied with weekly rations of rice and small sums of money. At the Branch Home of the Benares work at Jangambari 24 homeless and aged invalids were given shelter and supplied with all needs.

* * *

A strip of vacant land has been given to the Natrampally branch of the Vivekananda Society attached to the Ramakrishna Math (Monastery) at Vaniyambadi in Southern India, and money is being raised by public subscription to erect a small Math there. The growing work at Vaniyambadi is all due to the devotion and energy of one earnest follower of Sri Ramakrishna, who, under the encouragement and direction of the Ramakrishna Mission, has consecrated his life to the betterment of his fellow-villagers. Although a modest shopkeeper, through constant self-denial he has been able to maintain both a night school for boys and a night school for girls and also to build a Math with a meeting-hall, where every Sunday he gathers large congregations to tell them with natural fervent eloquence of the message of universal love and tolerance preached by Sri Ramakrishna. He has himself composed a number of sacred songs, both words and music, and trained his school children to sing them. Thus while carrying on the daily service of God strictly in accord with the Hindu custom, he has also introduced the Western note of congregational worship. Everywhere, where the influence of the Ramakrishna Mission has penetrated, one finds this tendency to break down the barriers of mere prejudice and tradition and mingle what is best of both East and West.

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"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. JULY, 1913 No. 7

The sages, the Illumined Ones, have taught us how to pray, how to take the Name of the Supreme. There are many who call on God, many who pray, but only a few receive answers to their prayers, because to call Him by the right Name and in the right way, we must find the right Self with which to make the call. Finding out this right Self is the aim of all religion and philosophy, and it is this which Yoga teaches. Its whole purpose is to bring union with the Higher Self, the real man, the true child of the Supreme Being. Finding the right Self through discrimination, through concentration, meditation, through work or devotion, these are the different methods of practice which it gives. But practice and realization are two different things; taking the Name of the Lord, practising concentration, and realizing God are very different. If, however, morning after morning and evening after evening the devotee goes to his sanctuary, and tries to pray, tries to meditate, tries to give his heart to God, although he may not seem to succeed in his spiritual practice because his whole time goes in struggling, yet this constantly strengthens his spiritual nature and must eventually bring him the vision of Truth. The Lord is ever ready to give His blessing to all, but our heart must crave for it before we can receive it.

The first thing in the spiritual life is to know that we want something. Just as when the fire of hunger burns within, we know that we want food and we strive to get it; similarly, hunger for higher things is the sign of our needing spiritual food. But no one can give us the spiritual food, no one can make us assimilate it, until the hunger is felt in the heart. When, however, our soul really longs for it, then all our energies become focused and nothing can prevent us from obtaining it. Intense longing to gain anything centralizes the whole nature and gives us mastery over our undisciplined forces. People have this hunger in different degrees. Some have it only temporarily. A blow comes and gives them disgust for worldly things, but circumstances change and the hunger passes away. When, however, it is based on experience, when anyone has had a glimpse of that inexhaustible treasure which can satisfy all our needs, then he struggles and strives until he gains it. There are others who may not have had this glimpse, but who by contact with a lofty soul become convinced that there is something beyond these earthly things, and they, too, are never satisfied until they reach it.

The great Sankara has said that three things are very rare to obtain. The first is human birth; the second, a thirst for liberation; and the third, the good fortune to find a true teacher, one who has had the vision of God. Unless a soul has a human form, he cannot gain this vision. Why? The animal form represents dullness, heaviness, and can never rise higher than the purely physical; and this applies to those who even in human bodies are still bound to the animal plane, never going beyond the thought of what to eat, what to wear,

how to acquire wealth or position. By human form is meant here a controlled and well-balanced mind, a mind that is not overpowered by brute tendencies. Then again, among intelligent human beings, it is rare to find one who feels the bondage of this world and earnestly desires to free himself from its fetters. And even when this desire comes to us, unless we are helped and guided by a wise teacher, one who is well acquainted with the spiritual realm, all our wanderings and strivings in the wilderness of life may prove vain and fruitless. Only those who have attained blessedness can tell us how to find that Self within us, which alone can call on the Supreme and pray to Him truly. Very few have the power to distinguish between the man made of flesh and the real man who is part of God. But when we find within us that which is a part of God, the man of flesh no longer has any power over us, we recognize that One from Whom we have come, and our whole being goes out to Him spontaneously in praise and supplication.

—Extract from Class Talk by Swami Paramananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

If you fill an earthen vessel with water and set it apart on a shelf, the water in it will dry up in a few days; but if you immerse the same vessel in water, it will remain full as long as it is kept there. Even so is the case of your love for the Lord. Fill and enrich your heart with the love of God for a time, then employ yourself in other affairs, forgetting Him the while, and you will find within a short time that your heart has become poor and empty of that precious love. But if you keep your heart immersed always in the ocean of Divine love, it is sure to remain ever full to overflowing with the water of the love Divine.

—Sri Ramakrishna.

He who has found this way of love, seeketh no other. He who turns on this pivot is in such wise a prisoner that his foot and hand and mouth and eyes and heart and all his human faculties belong to God. Happy is he who is thus imprisoned; the more thou art a prisoner, the more wilt thou be freed. That we may be so imprisoned and so freed, may He help us, who Himself is Love.

—*Meister Eckhart.*

God has not made man with two hearts within him. The Incomparable Majesty who has conferred the boon of existence upon thee, has placed within thee but one heart, to the end that with a single heart thou mayest love Him alone, and mayest turn thy back on all besides and devote thyself to Him alone, and refrain from dividing thy heart into a hundred portions, each portion devoted to a different object.—*Jami* (*Sufi Poet*).

Think oftener of God than you breath. If you always remember that God stands by, an inspector of whatever you do either in soul or body, you will never err, either in your prayers or actions, and you will have God abiding with you.

—*Epictetus.*

Forsaking egoism, power, pride, lust, anger and possession, freed from the notion of "mine" and tranquil: one is thus fit to become one with Brahman (the Supreme). Becoming one with Brahman, serene-minded, he neither grieves nor desires; alike to all beings, he attains supreme devotion unto Me (the Lord). By devotion he knows Me in truth, what and who I am; having thus known Me in truth, he forthwith enters into Me. —*Srimad-Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION

Lecture by Sister Devamata.

In the West the necessity of a method in religion has never been recognized. We fully recognize the need of method in science. No branch of knowledge indeed is called a science until it has a fully developed method. A man in his laboratory may by chance make a discovery, but only when he is able to formulate the law that governs it and evolve a method by which to bridle this law, is he called a scientist. Upon method the whole march of knowledge is based; and progress in science has primarily been marked by elaboration and diversification of method; until today, in such branches as Medicine, the old tradition of a certain dose for a certain disease has been entirely swept away, and each individual case determines the mode of treatment to be followed. In other sciences, climate, condition, place, the character of the object under investigation, all are leading to endless modification and refinement of method. Only the department of Religion has practically been left without system, although the same laws and needs apply to the human temperament as to physical nature. People are told "Be good." "How?" "Do no wrong." "Be honest." "How?" "Do not steal." "Be compassionate." "How?" "Do not strike your neighbor." But the space between the "Be" and the "Do not" stretches an unbridged gulf. The science of spiritual education remains unborn.

Not so was it with those ancient Rishis or Seers of Truth in the Himalayas—those mighty ancestors of both East and West. They recognized the value of the inner Science of the Soul. They understood that man was the important thing, that he must be the first object of research. A careful

investigator must know his own peculiarities and those of his instrument before he can perform any accurate experiment; in the same way, these great Seers said, man must know himself and his instrument of body and mind before he can work intelligently in this laboratory of the external universe. Therefore they made man their first study, and, as the fruit of this study, gradually evolved the science of Yoga,—a carefully elaborated system of objective and subjective education, through which each individual may gain the full use of his powers and faculties on every plane of consciousness.

After close observation of human life and activity, they found that all human beings fell naturally into four general groups. There were the temperamentally active, those who were too restless to pursue a quiet course; but who, if they were to attain, must do it through the right direction of their energies in active work. For them was developed *Karma-Yoga* or the path of wise and unselfish service. Then there were others who liked to sit still and delve into their own being, to study the operations of their mind, to fight the battle with their inner forces and master them. To such was given a systematic method of concentration and meditation or *Raja-Yoga.* Among these were a few who, utilizing the power thus gained, pushed still deeper into the realm of reason and philosophy, choosing the path of discrimination or *Jnana-Yoga.* And then there was the great mass of humanity, who worked and lived and thought and acted through their emotions; who loved and hated, drawn here by an attraction which they could not define or turned from there by a repulsion they could not overcome; and for them *Bhakti-Yoga* or The Path of Devotion was laid down.

Some people think, most people work, very few philosophize, but all people love; and as life has moved further and further away from the centre towards the circumference, more and more has it been shaped by this play of desire and emotion. There are very few today who can focus their energies and turn them inward. Among the active, some may remember through perhaps one task to do it for God; then, before they know it, they are doing all the other tasks for themselves. But every one is loving or trying to love in his ignorant way. Therefore Sri Ramakrishna has said that the path of devotion is the one path in our age of materialism by which man can attain God.

This love, however, must not be a mere emotion. We must learn to bridle and direct it. Love is a force like any other force. It is the strongest force in the universe; and as such it must be gathered up, controlled and directed through the right channel towards the right goal. To do this, method is necessary. Those ancient Rishis, with their unerring wisdom, realized this; so they put love under their mental microscope and analyzed it. They discovered that love was of three kinds: First, the love that asks everything and gives nothing; such love as we see in the undeveloped, those who are wholly on the plane of self. This is the love of the brute fighting for his bone, the love of the wild animal in the forest springing on his prey, the love of the primitive man swayed solely by instincts of self-interest and self-preservation.

Next there is the love that buys and sells, that gives so much and demands so much, that asks an even exchange, a fair bargain. All the play of human passion is on this plane of love. Why are we jealous? Because we love some one who is not returning us an equivalent, but is giving what

we consider our due to another. Why do we grow angry? Because we have done a service for which we are not receiving proper gratitude or consideration. Why are we depressed or despondent? Because we are loving the world and the world does not love us. We are doing our best and no one seems to appreciate us. This is bartering love, human love.

Then there is the love that gives freely and asks nothing in exchange. The love of a Christ outstretched on the cross. The love of a Buddha offering himself for the sacrifice in the place of those frightened dumb beasts. The love of a mother plunging into the fire to die with her child, if she cannot save it. This is Divine love, God-love.

We all have latent within us these three kinds of love. Following the path of devotion is not a question of acquiring love. We have it now. It is a question of lifting and expanding our consciousness; of travelling up round by round from this lower, self-centered love of the brute, through the human love of exchange or barter, on to the Divine love of free gift. Every man can do it and every religion has recognized this as the only path of true spirituality, the only path of God-vision.

But how can it be done? We must have a method. So these great Rishis set to work to develop one. They found that that which stood in the way of Divine love was self-love. It was not that every man was not loving, but he was loving the wrong thing, loving himself. Turn this love, which was now directed towards himself, towards God and the whole work was done. But again how? The self is so near and God seems so far away. This ego is so concrete and God such an

abstract thing. For that reason, they said, man must first learn to love something concrete. We can never replace a concrete object by an abstract. If we take a leg from the table, we cannot put a thought in its place; the table will fall. The concrete must be replaced by something equally concrete.

Man must first of all have a concrete Ideal. He must have some definite thing to serve and love, and so the path of discipleship became the great means of attainment in the East. He must begin by loving another self in place of his own, one that represents the Ideal; hence finding the spiritual teacher is set down as the preliminary step in the path of Bhakti-Yoga. Not any chance teacher, however. It must be one who has himself attained the higher vision through religious discipline and the practice of devotion. Having found him, the rule in those ancient times was that the disciple went to live with the Master, in order that through daily, hourly contact with a holy, pure, illumined life, he might come to know what holiness, purity and wisdom were. As the disciple thus watched and served, a great love necessarily awakened in his heart, for no one can live with a lofty, serene, compassionate being and not love him. Even a brute feels an instinctive love for something that is high and holy and beautiful. And when true love comes, the joy of denial comes with it. Is not every mother eager to deny herself for her child? So with the disciple. Through love for the Master, he learns to give up, not with the sense of giving up, but with the feeling of joyful privilege. Thus, little by little, the purified ego of the Master takes the place of the ego of the disciple. He forgets himself in humble, loving service. Then the Master, weaning his spiritual child, as it were,

gradually withdraws his own personality and leaves the disciple face to face with God. In this way love of self is lifted into love for God.

We cannot, however, all find such spiritual teachers. Life today, especially in the West, is not so constituted as to create them. We must learn our lessons of self-effacement as we can. Every true mother, every true wife or husband is learning them, but only partially. It is not enough to forget ourself for another self on the same plane. We must rise wholly off the plane of this lower self, if we would attain true devotion or Bhakti. We must take the great ones and follow them. We must forget ourselves in them. We must have something to love that is God-like, before we can love God. That is the reason why the Lord comes in finite form—in the person of a Christ or a Buddha—that man may be given definite examples of godliness to follow, Divine Masters to love and serve.

Creation means duality, the disturbed equilibrium of two opposing forces, a perpetual battle between light and darkness, good and evil, pleasure and pain. All action on this plane is also dual. Ordinary unselfishness must have as its reaction selfishness. If I constantly forget myself for you, you will unconsciously grow more and more self-centered. This is the inevitable result so long as our activity is confined to the plane of self. Ego and non-ego are only the obverse and reverse of the same coin. We must transcend this plane to attain true love. It is not enough to be unselfish; we must become selfless. Real selflessness never creates selfishness in anyone. It lifts the mind and heart until a man grows ashamed of his selfishness and strives of his own accord to conquer it. Were we at this moment to come into the presence of

Christ, we would feel as conscious of the stains on our soul as the child is, of the stains on its white frock when it sees the mother. We must develop that kind of selfless devotion which will make people aware, not that we are doing for them, but that we have forgotten that we are doing at all. Then our self-forgetfulness will lead them to try to forget too, and a consciousness of something higher than this human self will begin to stir within them.

This love, however, can only come through practice. You must practise devotion as systematically as you practise art or music, if you would become perfect therein. You must also have some concrete equipment for your study. All practical training, whether in the school or in the shop, calls for certain definite tools or instruments; and so also in your spiritual education. You must have such objective conditions as will stimulate your devotional nature. You must first of all create an atmosphere of reality, of actuality in your spiritual life. Therefore, set apart a room in your house for God; or if not a whole room, then at least a little corner of your own room. Put there a table, a picture, or any object that has a holy association for you. On the table keep a flower, if you will, your sacred books, whatever uplifts your thoughts, and feel that this is your sanctuary, where God has actually come to live with you.

In the beginning it may seem strange to you to thus have a definite place dedicated to God, but why should He not have such a place? Do you not give a special room to your mother or your child? How are you going to feel that God is as near, as real as father or mother, wife or husband, if you treat Him differently? Our whole life is immersed in the concrete, the material; and

as long as you keep God an abstraction, He can never seem real to you. But give Him a place in your home and that will help you to give Him a place in your heart. Learn to feel that He is living at your fireside and in the course of time you will realize that He is dwelling in your soul. Always care for your sanctuary yourself. Keep everything spotlessly clean. Never enter there without washing your hands and purifying yourself. Have certain fixed hours in the day in which you go there and turn your whole thought towards Divine things, through prayer and meditation or in reading some holy book. Do not say, "I have too many duties, I cannot neglect the family." Who is the family, if God is not in it? Give Him an equal place with its other members, if you cannot give Him a larger place; and serve Him in the same way as you serve them.

In India, God is regarded as the head of every household. Even the poorest hut has some small corner consecrated to Him and all is done for Him. The mother rises before dawn to sweep the threshold and decorate it with a pretty design made with fine rice flour, because she believes that God will be the first to cross it. The fruits and flowers in the garden are gathered as offerings for Him. The workman, before using new tools, wreathes them with flowers and lays them at the Lord's feet to be blessed. The wife brings her new cloth to show it to the Lord before wearing it. All food is carried first to the shrine and offered to Him, before it is eaten by the family. So real does this make God seem that old and young alike believe that He is actually with them, taking part in their daily life. The story is told of a small boy, the son of a Brahmin, who was left by his father to carry the noon-day meal to

the chapel. When it was ready, he laid it there at the Lord's feet, with firm faith that He would eat it. Then he sat with folded hands, praying; but the food remained untouched. "God, what is the matter with the food," he cried, "that you do not take it?" And again he folded his little hands and prayed. But still the food was there. At last he began to weep, saying: "I must have made a mistake or done something wrong. Come and help me, God, that I may not disappoint my father or bring misfortune on him." He implored with such intensity of trust and devotion that, it is said, God actually took form, came and ate the food. Then the heart of the little boy was content. He merely thought he had done his duty; he did not know that in the fullness of his faith he had wrought a miracle. To him God was an actual living presence. And why should it not be so? Did not Christ say that "where two or three are gathered together in My Name, there I will be in the midst of them?" When therefore an entire family does every task of the day taking His Name, why should He not be there, a true Presence in the household?

What is needed in the West today is a sense of God's reality to counterbalance the overpowering reality of Mammon. Much is said of the great increase just now in religious interest and spirituality. What, however, is stirring everywhere is not spirituality, but only the first awakening from a long sleep of materiality. The nervous stress and strain of life, the discontent and restless pursuit of pleasure, wealth, position: these are all signs that the exalted light of the spiritual consciousness has not yet touched us. The spiritual man walks serene, calm, uplifted; conscious first of God, and secondarily of other things. He knows all men through God, does all tasks for God, loves all be-

ings because they are children of God.

Do we do that? No. But we must learn to do it. We must feel that God is really our father, God is really our mother. Our closest relation is with Him. Our home belongs to Him. Whatever we are doing in this world, we are doing it because He has given us the task and we are responsible to Him for it. Yet we must not do it fearfully, as for a revengeful God, but because we love Him and long to please Him. We must feel that our wealth is God's. And is it not? Have we the power to keep it or take it with us? This life too is God's. Do we maintain it? If this night the call comes, can we stay one moment longer? No; all these things belong to Him. Then why not give them up to Him and free ourselves from a great burden of responsibility?

We have an idea that He will force us to turn away from our present duties and relations, that He will make us hard-hearted and forgetful of those about us, that He will carry us from the world into a cloister. We do not trust Him. We do not wholly believe in His efficiency. We think that He does not understand our conditions and work quite as well as we do. So we dare not yield ourselves up unreservedly to Him. Yet all the understanding that is in us, all the power that we have, our entire sense of duty, comes from God. Surrender your heart fully to Him, and the whole Divine ocean of peace and love, of life and wisdom will be yours. Resign yourself to God, and that which you know now in part, you will then know in full. The day you can give yourself up wholly to Him, it will mean the attainment of all that you are now so vainly striving for. It will be the throwing away of a small thing for a mighty thing. As a great Teacher in India once

said to me: "My life is eternal. This little life belongs to God. Let Him do with it what He will." Feel that; give it all up to Him at this moment and you will stand transfigured, as Christ was transfigured. If you can surrender yourself to the Lord, if you can make a complete sacrifice of yourself to Him, at once illumination will come and you will see all things clearly, not merely the things of the spirit, but the solution of the most practical problems of your daily life, the problems of your profession or business, of your home or your office.

Be willing at least to make the experiment. You will not lose anything. If you have a stream of clear, pure water running before your door, do you dig wells about your house? Yet that is what we are all doing. We are living on the bank of a mighty river, whose waters are the waters of infinite knowledge, endless happiness, eternal life; and we spend our time digging little wells in this world to get our own supply of fleeting happiness, of finite knowledge, of life that fades away in death. Draw closer to the river. Plunge into it if you can and become one with it. Then an inexhaustible store of Divine power, Divine love and strength will be yours.

You cannot, however, do this all at once. It must come gradually through the steadfast practice of devotion. When you rise in the morning, rise with a consciousness of God. Feel just as the little child does, when it opens its eyes, looks into the mother's face and smiles. Open your eyes and look into God's face. Before you rise from your bed, consecrate your body, your mind, your heart, your strength, your life to God and go forth feeling that they are God's. As you take your bath, offer that too, with the prayer that the Lord

may purify you both within and without and make you each day more perfect. Before you eat your meal, offer it up to Him—not in the customary way that He may bless it for you, but forget yourself entirely. Feel that it has been prepared for Him and that what you eat is merely the remnant. Offer up every task in devotion and love, it matters not how menial and sordid it may be. Look upon your money as a treasure belonging to God, to be spent for Him, not for self-gratification. Live every hour of the day for Him. Make Him your constant companion, your playmate even. Run to Him when you are in trouble or perplexity. Take refuge with Him when you are afraid. Seek advice from Him as you would from an earthly mother. Share your joys with Him. Carry the gifts you receive, the money you earn, the things you buy or make, carry them all to your little sanctuary and offer them to Him, just as you would show them to some dear one. Walk with Him, talk with Him, work with Him, eat with Him, live with Him, make every thought, every word, every act, every breath even, an offering to Him; and when the day is done and you lie down to rest, from the momentum of devotion you have gained, your mind and heart will still go to Him in sleep.

If you can thus offer up your whole being a joyful, living oblation to the Most High, God will take these ordinary hands and feet of yours, He will take your faltering mind and heart and make them His own. He will think and act and serve and love through them. Then you will become a clear channel through which the Divine will manifest, and your life, however humble or obscure, will be as a light set upon a hilltop, shedding radiance and blessing out over all men.

NOTICE

Swami Paramananda, after delivering courses of lectures in Geneva and Paris, has returned from Europe and resumed his work at the Vedanta Centre of Boston. During the month of June he conducted the greater part of the meetings, and through July will continue to hold two meetings a week. On Tuesday evening at eight o'clock there will be Talks on the Upanishads, open to all; and on Sunday morning at eleven the usual Service. At this, the subjects for the lectures will be: July 6th, "Who is our Saviour?"; 13th, "Reincarnation and Heredity"; 20th, "What is Meditation?"; 27th, "Final Emancipation." The Library and Reading-Room will be open every Thursday afternoon between 3 and 5. The telephone number for the summer months will be "Milton 11-W."

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. AUGUST, 1913 No. 8

As we cannot know except through effects that we have eyes, so we cannot see the Self except by Its effects. It cannot be brought down to the low plane of sense perception. It is the condition of everything in the universe, though Itself unconditioned. When we know that we are the Self, then we are free. The Self can never change. It cannot be acted on by a cause, because It is Itself the cause. It is self-caused. If we can find in ourselves something that is not acted on by any cause, then we have known the Self.

Freedom is inseparably connected with immortality. To be free one must be above the laws of nature. Law exists so long as we are ignorant. When knowledge comes, then we find that law is nothing but freedom in ourselves. The will can never be free, because it is the slave of cause and effect. But the "I" behind the will is free; and this is the Self. "I am Free"—that is the basis on which to build and live. And freedom means immortality.

—Unpublished notes of Class-Talks by Swami Vivekananda.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

So long as I do not have a knowledge of my True Self, so long as the Reality is hidden behind these outer semblances, I have a perception of many things and persons. Perfect knowledge is knowledge of oneness,—of one only Reality behind the many, one God behind the phenomenal universe.

Many think that knowledge of God cannot be attained without the study of books. But higher than reading is hearing; higher than hearing is seeing (or realization). Better than reading about Benares, is hearing of it from the lips of one who has visited it; better than hearing of it, is seeing Benares with one's own eyes.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

If you know Him by Whom you were made, you will know yourself. The wise man participates of God. The man who is worthy of God is also a God among men.

—*Sextus the Pythagorean.*

We must unfeignedly believe that God is in very fact within our souls, that we must worship Him and love Him and serve Him in spirit and in truth; that He sees all, and that unto Him all hearts are open, our own and those of all His creatures; that He is self-existent, whilst it is in Him that all His creatures live and move and have their being; that His perfection is Infinite and Sovereign, and demands the full surrender of ourselves, our souls and bodies. In simple justice we owe Him all our thoughts and words and actions. Let us see that we pay our debt.

—*Brother Lawrence.*

The absolute Existence, the Substance, (call it

what you will), is God. From Him all concrete individual existences arise. All that exists, exists in and by God; and can only thus be conceived. Here then the mystery of the world begins to unfold before the patient thinker; he recognizes God as the fountain of life; he sees in the universe nothing but the manifestation of God; the finite rests upon the bosom of the infinite; the inconceivable variety resolves itself into unity. There is but one reality, and that is God. Such was Spinoza's solution of the problem. To live with God, to know God with perfect knowledge, was the highest point of human development and happiness; and to this he consecrated his life.

—*George Henry Lewes.*

There is One Supreme Intelligence, who acts with order, proportion and design; the Source of all that is good and just. He is the Eternal Living Being; the most noble of all beings; who understands everything and gives motion to all things, continuing Himself immovable. There are many inferior deities, but only One Mover. This is the genuine doctrine of the ancients, which has happily escaped the wreck of truth and the rock of vulgar errors and poetic fables.

—*Aristotle.*

He (Brahman or the Supreme) is unseen, but seeing; unheard, but hearing; unperceived, but perceiving; unknown, but knowing. There is no other seer but He, there is no other hearer but He, there is no other perceiver but He, there is no other knower but He. This is the Self, the Ruler within, the Immortal.

—*Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.*

POETRY OF THE VEDAS

Extract from Lecture by Swami Saradananda

The universe is the expression of God, that ocean of absolute love, as the Vedas say. The root of poetry is in the absolute love. The expression of that unbounded love is poetry. The Rishis of the Vedas addressed God as the foremost, the oldest of poets, yet the one who never waxes old. Every expression is not only full of poetry, but is poetry; and blessed are they who can see poetry in everything, everywhere, at all times. Every real poet is a prophet, every real prophet a poet. A genuine expression of the human heart in language, under the controlling sense of the beautiful, is poetry. However separated by time and space, by racial or national prejudices, true poetry appeals to all minds. The same old law,—that expression will vary but the essence remain constant, holds good here as elsewhere. The same fulness of reverence and awe and love, which made the Vedic Seer of old thirst after God and righteousness and helped him to rise to the immediate vision of the superconscious, we see in other Scriptures recorded of other men. Wherever we find a genuine expression of the human heart, it is for us to enjoy; let us not be deprived of our joy by any prejudice.

The poetry of the Vedas is wholly religious. The Aryans, at the time of their composition, had evolved a high civilization and were a strong, sturdy people, full of faith in themselves and in God. In the Rig-Veda, the wonderful experiences of their passage over plains, rivers and vast mountains, became means of expressing their deep emotions. In the later Vedas and Upanishads we see the fruit of their sojourn in India. The writings are full of vigor, purity, simplicity; they are instinct with life.

The earlier portions are like the utterances of youth, —rash and exuberant; the later portions are controlled, chaste, conscious of reserve power, the expressions of a fully developed man. In the former, devotion is through fear; in the latter, devotion knows no fear; love is for love's sake, seeking no reward but that of loving. In the former, God is worshipped as the just judge; in the latter, as the soul of the man's soul. In India, of old, man's life fell into four periods: the student life, the family life, the forest life, and the monk life. After he had discharged his duties to family and state, a man retired to the forests on the slopes of the Himalayas, or on the banks of the Ganges, to meditate on the mysteries of life and death, leaving his place to younger men. There, amidst the singing of birds, the warbling of brooks, the wonders of dawn and day and night, he used to come face to face with nature and learn to feel himself a part of it. He dived into himself to the very roots of consciousness, and brought forth into the light of day the answer to the vexed questions of life, sparkling with dews of meditation. "From love Absolute has all this universe come forth, in love infinite does it continue after birth, towards love unlimited it flows." Need we wonder that the Upanishads are full of living poetry? The Aranyakas, or Forest Books, deal with the experiences of this marvellous third period of a man's life.

"Thou sun! Thou hast covered the face of truth with thy golden disk; do thou uncover it to my vision, for I thirst after true religion. Progenitor and controller of all, O Sun! withdraw thy rays awhile, that I may look at thy blissful form, the real cause of thy power. That form of thine is one with the Infinite Being, and I too am one with Him." The theme of the poetry of the Upanishads

is the Inexpressible, the Unknowable. No wonder the songs of the Rishis are paradoxical, often incomprehensible. Yet their imagry brings us to the very threshold of Deity. Nature becomes a translucent veil. Earth, sun, moon and stars grow dim; an ocean of light is revealed to you; you feel yourself grow larger as you read, till your little personality is dissolved and you feel one with that boundless ocean. "The knower is not born, nor dies, nor was born of old. Birthless, eternal, ever-existent, old and yet ever young, not slain with the slaying of the body. If the slayer thinks he can slay, or the slain that he can be slain, both of them know not. It neither slays nor is slain. It is finer than the finest, greater than the greatest, seated deep within the depth of every creature; beholding the greatness and glory of the Self. By His grace the controlled man goes beyond sorrow. He sits still and yet moves far away. He is all perfect. Who can know that effulgent Being, who is greater than the greatest, except myself? Formless, yet in all form; changeless, yet in all change; knowing that Self, the Lord, the enlightened man never grieves again! That Self cannot be attained by much learning, nor by a keen understanding, nor by the reading of many Scriptures. He whom the Self chooses, by him can the Self be gained. To him the Self reveals His own Essence." "Where the Self is, the eye cannot reach, nor speech, nor the mind; we cannot say we know It, neither do we know how to teach It to others. It is beyond what is known and what is unknown. Thus have we heard from them of old. That which cannot be disclosed by speech, but which gives rise to speech, that is the Self; not this which thou hast been worshipping—know That! That which cannot be measured by the mind, but by which the mind thinks,

that is the Self—know That! Those amongst us who think they know the Self perfectly, they know not; those who think they cannot know, they know!"

The characteristic peculiarity of the Upanishads is that they attempt to describe by negations. Metaphor after metaphor is given, only to be cast away. Not this, not this! Further! Beyond! Beyond! They fill the mind with amazing images, only to have them serve as successive rungs of a ladder. "Whence speech falls back with the mind, unable to attain—That is the ocean of unbounded bliss. Attaining That, the enlightened man goes beyond fear. Neither the sun appears bright there, nor the moon, nor the stars; the flash of lightning is darkness, the brightness of fire, gloom beside It. It shineth, and all else shineth after It; all else is bright alone in Its brightness." Large similes serve to express the omnipresence of the One and the merging of all things in the One. "As the rivers flowing into the ocean become one with it, losing separate name and form; so the enlightened one, freed of name and form, approaches the supreme effulgent being." "As from a blazing fire come out thousands of sparks of the same nature as the fire itself, thus, O Beloved, come out the different existences from that eternal unchangeable Being and enter Him again." Birds, trees, a chariot drawn by fiery steeds, all serve to suggest relations of the individual soul to itself and its divine beginning and end. Allegories abound, picturesque stories, but all have one interpretation, the unknown Knower that knoweth us, in and through us—Whom to know is life eternal.

(*Reprinted from Lectures, Literary and Religious.*)

KENA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

Peace Verse

May my limbs, speech, Prana (life-force), sight, hearing, strength and all my senses, gain in vigor. All is the Brahman (Supreme Lord) of the Upanishads. May I never deny the Brahman. May the Brahman never cast me off. May there be no denial of the Brahman. May there be no separation from the Brahman. May all the virtues of the sacred Upanishads rest in me, who delight in the Atman (the Higher Self). May they rest in me.
Peace! Peace! Peace!

Part I

I

By whom commanded and directed does the mind go towards its objects? Commanded by whom does the life-force, the first (Cause) move? At whose will men utter speech? What power directs the eye and ear?

Thus the disciple approaches the Master and inquires concerning the cause of life and human activity. Ordinary minds are satisfied to see the effect only. Very few have the keenness of perception, the desire, or the purity to inquire about the subtler cause behind. Only a discriminative and Truth-seeking mind will formulate such questions, and it was because the disciple had a sincere longing for the Truth that he asked them. He desired to know who really sees and hears, who actuates the apparent man, the physical man. He perceived all about him the phenomenal world, the existence of this he could prove by his senses; but he sought to know the invisible, causal world, of which he was now

only instinctively conscious. Who is the cause of the apparent man, and what is the nature of the real man? Is mind all-pervading and all-powerful, or is it impelled by some other force? Who sends forth the vital energy without which nothing can exist? What is the power by which mortals speak or by which eye and ear perform their functions?

The teacher replies:

II

It is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of the speech, the life of the life, the eye of the eye. The wise freed (from the senses and from mortal desires), after leaving this world, become immortal.

When the soul has departed, the body may still have good ears, good eyes, all the organs may be there intact, yet they are not performing any task. Why? Because the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, he who talks and sees and hears and thinks, the living Cause, the *Atman* or Self is not there. It is because of That a man is able to see, to hear, to think and speak. As long as anyone confounds soul with non-soul, the real with the unreal, so long as he confines himself to this physical plane, he remains bound to perishable things and cannot attain immortality. An ordinary man hears, sees, thinks; he is satisfied to know as much as can be known through the senses, but he perceives nothing behind the ear or eye or mind. If there is anything there, he does not analyze and try to find it. There is a difference between the manifested form and That which is manifested through the form, knowing That, one becomes immortal. We are very much identified with our external nature. If some one asks who we are, we at once give answer "I am Mr. So and So, I am born in such a family;" and we

draw a condition that is limited in every way. Thus we hold a false perception and identify ourselves with the lower Self. This comes from the fact that our conception does not go beyond this little circle of flesh which constitutes the outer man. We think we have eyes, ears, and identify ourselves with them, but our true Self is not the eye, our true Self is not the ear. It is that which enables eye and ear to perform their tasks. When we know that, we shall not die with the body. One who clings to the senses and to things which are ephemeral, must die many deaths; but he who knows the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, having severed himself from his physical nature, that man becomes immortal. There are two natures, the real and the apparent. Immortality is attained when man transcends his apparent nature and finds that subtle, eternal and inexhaustible Essence which is within himself.

III

There the eye does not go, nor speech, nor mind. We do not know That; we do not understand how any one can teach It. It is distinct from the known and also It is beyond the unknown. Thus we have heard from the ancient (teachers) who have instructed us in this.

Ordinary eyes are too limited to see that subtle Essence. Then you may say: If we cannot see It, what is the use of searching? It means only that we cannot perceive It with these physical senses. Nor can speech convey what is Its nature. It cannot be expressed by finite language, because It is infinite. It is distinct and separate from that which is known. We cannot say that we know God as we know finite things; for our conception of knowing anything is to know its name and form. But

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the knowledge of God is distinct from this. This is why some have described God as unknown and unknowable; because He is far more than eye or ear or speech can comprehend or express. This becomes clear when we consider the three states of mind:—the subconscious, the conscious and the superconscious; the state of ignorance, the state of intelligence, and the state of wisdom. In the state of ignorance, we cannot know the true nature of anything, because our mind is too limited. God must ever remain unknown to the mind in this state. In the state of intelligence, we begin to know partially; but our knowledge is not free from error. This is the state which Christ described as "seeing through a glass darkly." But wisdom knows fully, or "face to face."

The Upanishad does not say that God cannot be known or that He can be known. He is unknown to man's finite nature. Man cannot conceive of the Infinite Whole. How can a mortal who has a limited nature and limited capacity contain all of God? But He can be known by the purified mind and heart, by the God-like nature. The wise man says: "How can I know Him?" Because the more we know about Divinity, the less we feel that we can ever know It. To know It we must raise ourselves to the same level. A mountain top may look very beautiful from the valley below, we may be able to see it vaguely, but we cannot have any full conception of what it is. Only as we approach it, will it reveals little by little its true form and nature.

IV

That which speech does not illumine, but which illumines speech, know that alone to be the Brahman (The Supreme Being), not this which people worship here.

V

That which cannot be thought by mind, but by which, they say, mind is able to think, know that alone to be the Brahman, not this which people worship here.

He is not dependent on speech, but speech is dependent on Him. It is because He is present that the senses, mind and body act. He is the heart of all these functions. But if man does not know this, then he cannot worship truly. Few people worship the true God, the Sustaining Power of the universe. Unconsciously they give all their devotion to what is fleeting, because their mind cannot go beyond that; and since they must worship something, they worship matter. The tendency of the unawakened mind is to cling to the visible. It judges everything by the external. But merely having hands and feet, eyes and ears, does not make one a worthy human being. It is the knowledge of that inner Power which makes man worthy. This is where the blunder of human life comes. It is not wrong for us to be conscious of our body and senses, but if we are not conscious of That which sustains them, then we fall into error. Worship is here used in the sense of "cherishing," "clinging to;" and he who cherishes the world but does not cherish its Source, must remain in ignorance. That by which man is able to see, to talk, to hear, breathe and think, that Power which is behind all activity of mind and senses, if we can tear the veil and worship That, then we worship truly.

VI

That which is not seen by the eye, but by which the eye is able to see, know that alone to be the Brahman, not this which people worship here.

VII

That which cannot be heard by the ear, but by which the ear is able to hear, know that alone to be the Brahman, not this which people worship here.

VIII

That which one does not breathe with the breath, but by which breath is inbreathed, know that alone to be the Brahman, not this which people worship here.

By the eyes we can see, by the ears we can hear, by our words we can express; through all these we can get some idea of God, but God is something beyond. Ordinarily we know three states,—waking, dreaming and sleeping; but there is a fourth state, which transcends these. In the ordinary conscious state we perceive things, but our mind is not clear enough to save us from error. In the fourth state, which is super-conscious, the mind has all the strength of the conscious state and something more. It is by this that God can be known. If God could be known by the limited mind and senses, then the knowledge of God would be like any other knowledge; spiritual science would be like any other science. No, it can be known by the purified mind only. Therefore to know God, man must purify himself. The mind described in the Upanishads is the superconscious mind,—the mind of the mind, that which makes it possible for the mind to think. According to the Vedic sages, mind is only another sense. This form of mind is the ordinary mind. This mind is limited and with it one cannot go very far. But when the same individual comes to know the mind of the mind, this ordinary mind becomes illumined and he gains the light of true knowledge.

Union between subject and object means knowl-

edge. To attain that union, we must take some method. For instance, if we want to comprehend the eye of the eye, we must make our mind introspective and practise contemplation. The teacher says: "It is not the thing itself. Do not think you can see because you have these eyes." If you have a telephone, even though it has a receiver, yet it cannot transmit the message unless it is connected with the main wire. So you may have body, mind and senses, but they cannot perform their functions if not connected with their Source. A man who desires to know the purpose of existence, who has any discrimination whatever, cannot be satisfied with mere knowledge of external phenomena; he must search and that search leads to the root of things. You are the one who wants to know and you are also the object of knowledge; when the two are united, then the ultimate knowledge is attained. The veil which separates us from the thing to be known, must be destroyed and every time we strive for higher things, we make the veil thinner. To do this we must rise above duality; we must learn to worship the One. Nowhere is this more clearly expressed,—that there is only one God, One to be known, One to be worshipped, than in the Upanishads. This is why the Upanishads are called the Scriptures of Supreme Wisdom (Vedanta).

(*To be continued in the October number.*)

The earliest of these philosophical treatises (the Upanishads) will always, I believe, maintain a place in the literature of the world as the most astounding productions of the human mind in any age and in any country.

—*Max Müller.*

REPORTS

During July at the Vedanta Centre in Boston the Tuesday Evening Class, usually for regular students only, was open to the public and an unexpected number of strangers availed themselves of the opportunity to hear the Swami Paramananda expound the Katha-Upanishad, manifesting the deepest appreciation of his clear and inspiring explanation of that remarkable Scripture. The attendance at the Sunday morning Services was also exceptionally large. The tenor of the lectures at all of these was eminently practical and helpful. In the one on "What is Meditation?" the Swami laid convincing stress on the need of the meditative habit in every department of life, if man would gain the mastery and use of all his powers. In "Self-Help and Self-Surrender" he showed that so long as man considers himself the doer, he is responsible for his own actions and must help himself. When, however, he has risen to the plane where he sees God as the only Doer, complete surrender to the Divine becomes possible. Therefore self-help is the preparatory stage, leading to the higher stage of self-surrender.

* * *

Swami Bodhananda is carrying on the work of the Vedanta Society in New York with praiseworthy zeal. A new circular, just issued by the Society, announces a Public Lecture every Sunday at 3 P. M., a Gita-class on Tuesday at 8, and classes for the study of concentration and meditation on Thursday at 8 and Friday at 3.15 P. M.

* * *

At the Vedanta Society in San Francisco the usual meetings will continue through the summer:—three lectures every Sunday; a Gita Class on Tues-

day and a class for the study of the Vedas on Thursday, both at 8 P. M. The work is conducted by Swami Trigunatita and Swami Prakashananda.

* * *

The second Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Sevashrama at Allahabad records a most promising growth in the new work. Like all similar institutions carried on by the Ramakrishna Mission, it renders help without regard to caste or creed, and in the 12 months under review 5856 patients were treated, among them being 11 Christians and 207 Mohammedans. Allahabad is an important place of pilgrimage in India and it was especially to care for suffering pilgrims far from home and friends that the hospital was established. It is at present sadly in need of a proper building to house the sick and Swami Vigyanananda, now in charge, closes his report with an earnest appeal for help in this direction.

* * *

The eighth Report of the Ramakrishna Relief Work in Bahubazar, Calcutta, gives as its chief work during the past year the support and education of 22 destitute boys; and its patient, modest efforts have already received the recognition of the Bengal Government, and the municipality, besides many prominent persons. The members, thus encouraged, are striving to raise funds for a permanent Boys' Home.

Another similar Society has been formed in a very small village of the Hoogli District and is working bravely to provide relief for the suffering and poverty-stricken. It is interesting to see how Swami Vivekananda's oft-reiterated, stirring appeals, added to the examples of loving, tireless service set by the members of the Ramakrishna Mission, are bringing into life such charitable organizations in every part of India.

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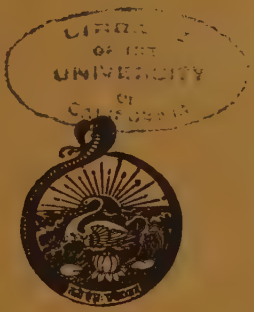

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. SEPTEMBER, 1913 No. 9

It was discovered in the early stages of Vedic research that man was not homogeneous in his constitution and capacity. Far from being a simple independent mechanism, thinking through a brain, feeling through a heart, functioning through certain members, the whole of equal power and duration, he was an aggregate of many different parts, widely varying in their nature, duration and range of action. In the Upanishads we are told: Beyond the senses is the mind, behind the mind is the intellect or discriminative faculty, beyond the intellect is the individual soul, behind this the Prakriti or unmanifested creative force, and still further beyond is the Great Supreme Self, which is one with God the Absolute. In other words, man stretchés from the atom to the Infinite, touching the universe at every point, the planes of his being like a broadening chain of reservoirs, supplied from the mighty ocean of cosmic life and all joined by one stream,—the stream of thought. Ceaselessly this stream flows on, the proof of existence itself Descartes declares in his fundamental axiom: "I think, therefore I am." If it flows united, well held within its banks, then its current is swift and strong and quickly cuts a deep and clean-swept

bed. If, on the contrary, it branches out into a delta of little streams, then even though it cover a larger area, its current slackens and it soon grows shallow.

The use man makes of this stream of thought determines his condition, as truly as the use of the water-ways of a country affects its prosperity and development. If he regards it merely as a commercial high-road for transportation, to bring him health, wealth, pleasure, power, he will undoubtedly increase in worldly advantage; but only as he learns its real value and begins to follow its course back to the unknown regions of its source will he gain knowledge and understanding. Again and again the illumined Seers of the Upanishads admonish man: "Do not concern yourself with what thought can bring you. Rather seek to find where it can lead you"; and this journey along the stream of thought to the origin of all things is the chief subject of the Vedic Scriptures.

It becomes plain that by this stream man is connected with every plane of cosmic being; and if he but pursues it with determination, all the realms of knowledge must be open to him. Swami Vivekananda asserts that "by concentration of the thought every truth in the universe becomes evident"; and Patanjali, the founder of the system of spiritual or super-conscious development known as Yoga, claims that if anyone directs his thought in a single, determined current on any object of the external or internal world, its innermost nature will be revealed to him. Before each one of us lie these endless realms of knowledge, the stream that will bear us to them is flowing by our door. Shall we sit at home in indolent content, or shall we rouse ourselves and set out on this journey towards Truth?

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

God is seen when the mind is tranquil. When the mental sea is agitated by the wind of desires, it cannot reflect God and then God-vision is impossible. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.—*St. Paul.*

Nowhere either with more quiet or more freedom from trouble does a man retire than into his own soul, particularly when he has within him such thoughts that by looking into them he is immediately in perfect tranquillity; and I affirm that tranquillity is nothing else than the good ordering of the mind. . . . . Remember to retire into this little territory of thy own and above all do not distract or restrain thyself, but be free. . . . . Things do not touch the soul, for they are external and remain immovable; but our perturbations come only from the opinion which is within.

—*Marcus Aurelius.*

As the champion warrior relies for victory upon his armor's strength, so right thought is like a strong cuirass able to withstand the six sense-robbers. —*Buddha.*

For thoughts alone cause the round of births; let a man strive to purify his thoughts. What a man thinks, that he is: this is the old secret. The mind, it is said, is of two kinds, pure or impure; impure from the contact with lust, pure when free from lust. Mind alone is the cause of bondage and liberty for men; if attached to the world, it becomes bound; if free from the world, that is liberty. —*Maitrayana-Brahmana-Upanishad.*

POWER OF THOUGHT

Lecture by Swami Paramananda.

Nothing is more potent to mould human life than thought. It is the motive power which drives this machine of body, mind and senses; but its activity is not limited to the physical organism or to immediate surroundings. It encircles vaster regions, outstripping the lightening in swiftness. All mortals possess this power intrinsically. Though its outer manifestation may vary in different individuals, yet it is equally latent in every living creature. The variations which exist arise from the differences in the development of the mind, which is its conveying medium. According to the capacity of the medium is this inner power manifested. As the one sun appears of varying strength when it shines through clear or clouded glass, so the power of thought through some minds shines more effulgently than through others.

The use or abuse of this force determines the destiny of man. When the thought is properly controlled and directed, it lifts him ever higher and higher; when it is ill-directed and uncontrolled, it drags him down and bars his growth, for verily man is what he thinks. Our whole life is nothing but the outer manifestation of our inner thought. Whether this is conscious or unconscious, it is always a creative force, a seed which sooner or later will bear fruit as good or evil action. If our mind dwells on things which are trivial and unwholesome, very soon we find that our whole nature is being colored by them. Similarly, when our mind is fixed on lofty ideas, our nature is inevitably uplifted and transformed.

All activity is preceded by thought. First we think, then we act; therefore it is impossible for any one to refrain from mistakes or evil deeds

without paying proper heed to his thoughts. The thought must first be correct before we can act wisely. Buddha says: "If you remove (from conduct) the purpose of the mind, the bodily act is but as rotten wood; wherefore, regulate the mind, and then the body will spontaneously go right." There are very few people who think consciously. An impulse comes, a desire awakens in the heart, and at once the whole thought is carried away by it; it takes possession of the mind, as if the man has sold himself to it. In the Gita we read: When a man's mind constantly dwells on sense-objects, he begins to value them and becomes attached to them. From this attachment arises the desire to possess them, and if anything stands in his way, he grows angry. Through anger he loses all control and power of discernment, and thus he works his own ruin. At first the object and he stand as two separate entities; but through attachment and lack of discrimination, he becomes identified with it and naturally suffers from whatever effect it may produce.

When, however, the mind is controlled and discriminative, one can avoid such dangers. Suppose someone speaks harshly to you, can it really hurt you? No; it is you who give it importance through your own thought. If you analyze you will find that you are hurt on account of your own mental attitude; and it is that which shatters your strength and brings suffering. Without a properly controlled mind and the habit of right thinking, therefore, no one can safely travel along the path of life. Even our ordinary duties cannot be performed without right thinking; and right thinking means the awakening of intuition, the establishing of tranquillity in our whole being, cultivating strength of mind. This is what we need

in order to think properly. Ordinary minds think, but their thoughts are broken before they have achieved the object of their thought; therefore they cannot attain their purpose. However small or great the object to be gained, unless the mind is a thinking mind it cannot accomplish anything. No matter what we do, no matter how insignificant our position may be, whether many depend on us or few, we have a certain responsibility in life. To meet this ably, we must learn to live understandingly; and we cannot acquire understanding without bringing our thoughts under our control, making the mind introspective; in other words, without gaining the power of concentrated thought.

The chief aim of all religion and philosophy is to lift the mind to a state of perfect balance, serenity and vigor. In order to do this, concentration is essential; hence practical religion always leads to contemplation. We must think diligently and learn to adjust our forces. We must find out what are our needs and defects; what are the causes of our mental disturbances and distractions. We can discover these things only when we look within; so we must become meditative, for going within ourselves is what meditation means. When we think constantly of objects in the external universe, that too, is a kind of meditation, since our thoughts flow steadily in that direction; but this dissipates our strength. When, however, our mind is focused and turned inward, when it is well established on the higher problems of life, then it may be called truly meditative and through such thought we gain real wisdom and happiness.

Meditation is the key to knowledge, the source of all power. Even those who seek knowledge on the material plane,—scientists, discoverers, inven-

tors, must develop a certain habit of meditation. If they do not have great concentration, if they do not plunge heart and soul into their research, they cannot discern anything. In the same way, when we wish to discover the subtler facts of the spiritual plane, we must gather up all our forces and turn them within; then alone can we understand. Man must know. Merely believing in some theory, in some doctrine or dogma is not enough for the intelligent mind. A wakeful mind cannot be satisfied by simply hearing about things from others. Therefore Vedanta declares that religion is a matter of perception, of actual realization or individual experience. This power of realization is not confined to a few great ones only. It is the birthright of every living being. We all have the power to centralize our energies and realize the same Truth. If we will only try to awaken our inner nature and strive with perseverance, determination and real power of will, nothing can stand in our way.

Through the meditative habit we gain intuition. Things which once seemed impossible grow possible to us, when we learn to turn our eyes inward and see for ourselves. All the mighty truths proclaimed by the great Seers, we too can perceive and prove them, if we follow in their footsteps and lead the same kind of life. Self-control, the mastering of our lower nature, the acquisition of direct knowledge: these are not mere theories. They can be achieved. We know that there are people born with superior power, superior understanding, greater control than others. What makes the difference? It is the wakeful nature of their mind which enables them to acquire these. We all have the same possibilities, however. We can either become weak by letting our mind be scat-

tered and filled with selfish desires, or we can become great mentally and spiritually by focusing all our energies on higher ideals.

It is said in the Scriptures: "Mind alone is the cause of the bondage and of the liberation of mankind." The impure mind binds man, the purified mind frees him. Mind is impure when it is divided and lacking in discrimination. It is pure and clean when it is single; for purity means singleness, something that is unmixed. The tendency of the undisciplined mind is to be divided and scattered. Most people never try to control their thought; they do not seem to realize that following it helplessly, letting it wander hither and thither unchecked, means a tremendous waste of energy. The scattered state of mind, indeed, is the greatest drawback in all human endeavor. We may have every advantage in our outer life, but if we are lacking in purity or singleness of mind, we can make little use of our opportunities. Most of our sorrow, suffering, sickness and failure are due to a divided mind. Until we can gain command over our scattered forces, we can achieve very little on any plane. In fact, we cannot perform the simplest task ably unless we have a certain amount of concentration in our thought. The unconcentrated mind is bound to be visionary and unstable. It cannot see the present clearly, it has no power of foresight with regard to the future, and it cannot retain the experiences of the past. Experience is the basis of all our knowledge; and only when we can retain what we have learned through experience, can we progress. Yet how few really remember the lessons they have gained from their past experiences, so that they can recall them and not commit the same blunder over and over. This is because their mind is so fickle,

so unstable that they cannot carry any line of thought to a conclusion. Continuity of thought is necessary to attain success in any undertaking and continuity comes only through the power of concentration.

There can be no peace or rest for us until our mind is well collected and focused. Often we see a person who is tired and wants to rest, but even though he may be lying on a soft bed, yet he finds no rest. Why? Because his forces are so scattered, his thought is so distracted, that he cannot quiet his mind, even though his body is free from activity. There are some who have the notion that resting means doing absolutely nothing—that if the mind is restless, to quiet it we must give up all thought. But we cannot give up thinking. The mind will always go on thinking something; only there are certain thoughts which are restful and certain thoughts which bring unrest. When our mind is directed towards elevating objects, then it will grow calm, serene and strong. But this is only possible through constant mental discipline. When we first try to focus our thoughts, we find how dissipated they are. This state, however, is nothing but the result of our own unconscious habits of thinking. Therefore, to surmount these, we must cultivate counter-habits; for all thinking is a matter of habit. At first it may be very difficult, because all our past habits rise and try to overthrow the mind; but through constant determined effort and discrimination we can conquer. For instance, one who has been accustomed to many forms of distraction, like reading light novels, finds it very difficult to hold the mind on serious subjects. Yet by persisting, he begins to cultivate a taste for them and finds the same satisfaction in these that he once found in his previous habits.

This shows that what we call the natural trend of mind is nothing but a habit which we ourselves have formed. Therefore the most weak and degraded human being can become strong and noble through the power of well-directed thought. The same force which once dragged him down, now becomes the means of his regeneration. By right thinking a man can free himself from bondage, disease, imperfection; and through wrong thinking he can create fetters for himself. By constantly thinking that you are pure, that you are a child of God, you become so. And this is one of the great lessons which have been given to the world by the Teachers of India. From time immemorial these sages have declared that if a man desires to be liberated from bondage, the power of right thought must be awakened in him. Let a man feel hopeful, for he has something which is mighty within. Let him not think that he is weak or a sinner. If he has committed blunders out of weakness or ignorance, it can never help him to dwell on them. Even if he has done something wrong in his life, it would be better for him to forget it and start afresh. That is the only way he can counteract his defects and go onward. Let him have an ideal on which to focus his thought; then, when he has learned to concentrate all his forces on that, he will very soon rise above his present weakness; for all weakness is the result of dissipation and misuse of energy.

There are four kinds of help which we can render our fellow-beings. We may give food, clothes or money to a needy man, but his need returns. Next we may offer secular education. Education opens a man's eyes and teaches him to take care of himself; so to give him knowledge, even secular knowledge, is a great thing. The third

form of help is to save a man's life. This may seem the greatest, but death may seize him again at any moment. The fourth and highest help is to teach a man how to control and direct his thought properly, that he may gain understanding or wisdom, for this will save his soul. The first three forms of help are unquestionably very good; but the only permanent help is to give people the mastery over all their powers, since they can then stand on their own feet and work out their own salvation.

The secret of success, health, and happiness lies in the power of concentration; and nowhere is this need felt more keenly than in the Western world to-day. What is the cause of the many nervous disorders to be found among people? Is it because they work too much? No, it is not the amount of their work. It is the misdirection of their energies. It is the lack of proper control over mind and body which at present is killing everyone little by little. Work of itself will not exhaust us, will not make us restless and unhealthy. It is misdirected activity. We do not know how to use our activities properly, how to protect ourselves from our own undisciplined thoughts. What we need is not so much to lessen our activity, as to gain the habit of control over our mind and through our mind over all our forces.

This, however, cannot be accomplished in a day or by chance. Nor can it be given by another. It can be acquired only by ourselves through regular practice. In the Gita when Arjuna, the disciple, says: "This wisdom which has been declared by Thee as even-mindedness, I do not see the possibility of its lasting existence because of the restlessness of the mind"; the Lord replies: "It is true that the mind is restless and difficult to con-

trol, yet through constant practice and dispassion it can be subdued. But this wisdom is undoubtedly difficult to attain by one of uncontrolled nature." Therefore, if you wish to gain control over your mind, you must take up some regular practice. The first thing you must learn is to sit quietly; for until you can restrain your physical activities and hold your body still, you cannot gain mental poise. Nothing will so quickly cure nervousness and benefit the health than the daily exercise of sitting still and checking all unnecessary and unconscious movements of the body. When you have succeeded in doing this, the mind will naturally grow calmer. Then you must take some Ideal on which to fix your thoughts. At first the main practice will be to drive out from the mind the many other thoughts that crowd into it; but by persistent effort the number of these will gradually decrease and the mind will become stronger, steadier and purer. Even a few moments spent in this way each day will clarify the mind, strengthen the will and enable you to do your duty with ever-growing efficiency and wisdom.

Our thought is such a mighty factor in our daily living, that one single thought in the morning can fill our whole day either with sunshine and joy or with gloom and depression. All our power and all our weakness come from this one source. Each one of us creates a world of his own, which is but a reflection of his thought. It is our own mental attitude which inspires love or hatred in those whom we meet. Every thought of love sent out by us is sure to awaken a thought of love in response; so too with every unloving thought. Each one of our little thoughts also unites us with the great cosmic currents of thought, intensifying our individual state of mind. All the results we attain

are according to our thoughts. It is the thought which determines the true value of every act. Sri Ramakrishna shows this in His parable of two friends. One day they were strolling about together when they passed a place where a religious service was going on. One of them said: "Come, let us stop here for a while and listen to the holy words which are being spoken." The other refused, saying: "No, what is the use of listening to the Bhagavatam? Let us spend the time in yonder public hall where we shall have some recreation and pleasure." The first one, unwilling to do this, stayed to hear the Bhagavatam; while the other went to the place of amusement. But all the time he was there, he kept thinking to himself: "Alas! why have I come here? How much happier my friend must be, listening to the sacred words of the Lord." Thus, although in a public hall, his thoughts were fixed on God; while the other, who was listening to the Bhagavatam, found no joy in it, but kept regretting that he had not gone with his friend. His thought remained constantly on the pleasure he was missing, so he reaped the fruit of worldly thought; while his friend gained all the merit of holy thought.

This shows that our outer actions cannot be fruitful unless our thought is in accord with them. That is why many of our apparently good undertakings do not bring the desired results; it is because our heart and hand do not work together. Without harmony between body and mind we cannot achieve any great end, either physically or mentally. When, on the contrary, all our forces are united, so great is our power, that, if we fix our thought on anything, it is sure to come to us. Hence we must consider carefully whether what we are thinking of, we shall want when it comes.

This is the reason why we should practise discrimination at every step. But not only for our own sake, for the sake of others as well we should guard our thought carefully, because it is influencing directly or indirectly all those with whom we associate. We may refuse to acknowledge this, saying: "I have no responsibility for any one else;" but no one can come in contact with us without being affected by our state of mind. It may not be intentional on our part, but our every thought, conscious or unconscious, is radiating a good or evil influence and creating an atmosphere which everyone must feel.

It is not enough, however, merely to discover this power within us; we must also find out what it is, whence it is, whose it is. Unless we understand this, we cannot use it intelligently. So long as it is in the hands of one who is limited and ignorant, it is a danger; for infinite power in finite hands is always dangerous. We must trace it to its source. We must realize that our little mind is an actual part of a great universal mind, the thought which impels and shapes our life is in reality one with a mighty current of cosmic thought. We may use it independently and to small ends, to gain health, mental power or success; but only when it is united with the Supreme, when our mind constantly rests in Him, when we are conscious of His presence in all our thoughts, in all our acts, in all our life, when our whole heart, soul and body become instruments in His hands, only then do we gain possession of this power in its full measure. Therefore let a man ever remain connected by his thought with the pure Essence of his being.

FREEDOM

No, not the plaything of the years,
And not the drudge of circumstance,
If lifted far from human fears,
To a great height above mischance,
The steadfast will, alert and free,
Lives its pure life, rapt in tranquillity.

—*H. P. K.*

THE STORY OF KING BALI

There was once a king in India by the name of Bali, who, thirsting like Alexander the Great for new conquest and restive under the enforced monotony of a peaceful rule, commanded his minister to find some new outlet for his pent-up energies.

The minister replied: "True it is that you have conquered all the world; but there lies still a kingdom unsubdued, vaster, richer than any you have vanquished."

"Where is it?" the king asked eagerly. "I know well all countries and all peoples, but of such a kingdom I have not heard. Tell me where it can be found and who rules over it, that I may at once set out and conquer it."

"The Sovereign of that empire is a gentle, unoffending person easy to capture," was the answer; "but he has a minister who is full of cunning and intrigue, and difficult to overcome. Unless, however, he is subdued no one can approach that kingdom."

The king was all aflame with desire of conquest. "Tell me, tell me where it is," he exclaimed. "That kingdom must be won! My name is not Mahabali if I do not conquer it. Make ready an army and let us be on the march at once."

With quiet deliberation the minister replied:

"That kingdom is within yourself."

The king drew back in dumb surprise, and then with grave earnestness said:

"You speak the truth. The Atman or Higher Self, that inner ruler of man, can never be approached unless his minister, the mind, is first subdued. But how difficult is this! Yet of what avail is it to conquer the whole world and be the slave of one's own self?"

And it is recorded that from that day the king devoted himself to the subjugation of his inner kingdom.

REPORTS

During the month of August both the Sunday Service and the Tuesday Evening Class at the Boston Vedanta Centre were very well attended. After completing the study of the Katha-Upanishad in the Tuesday Class, Swami Paramananda began some Talks on the Bhagavad-Gita. The subjects for his lectures at the Sunday Service were: "Law of Karma," "What is Yoga?" Jnana-Yoga" and "Karma-Yoga."

* * *

Swami Sarvananda, who has been placed in charge of the Madras branch of the Ramakrishna Mission's work, has been carrying on a zealous and praiseworthy crusade throughout Southern India; and recently he pushed his efforts as far as Singapore, where he was invited to open a Vivekananda Reading Hall. While there he delivered several able lectures each of which was heard with deep appreciation by several thousand people.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. OCTOBER, 1913 No. 10

Nothing is more contrary to the highest teaching of Vedanta than to accept forms and rituals in place of that which is absolute and undivided; and also there is no other religion or philosophy more tolerant towards ritualism and dualism. First of all we must understand that God the Absolute, the One without a second, can never be represented by one or many forms. It is a mistake to suppose that the Supreme Being can be confined in any fixed set of forms, rituals, doctrines or dogmas. Those who try to represent That which is infinite and formless by finite objects can never succeed. Yet, whenever the mind tries to conceive of God the Absolute, it at once begins to form ideas which result in shaping a definite picture of Him; for it is the natural tendency of the human mind to create something concrete. Therefore Vedanta declares that monism and dualism, the conceptions of God with and without form, are equally true and necessary to man in the different stages of his spiritual development. The two ideas may seem contradictory, and they would be if it were a question of finite objects; but Infinity is boundless, limitless; in It are contained all aspects and all attributes. We must never confine our idea of Him to one thing. We may begin with form, but we must end with

the formless. We may start as dualists, but our goal must always be the One, because oneness, oneness with the Supreme, is the solution of life.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

These philosophers forget that the same Being is both personal and impersonal. They do not see that the Supreme Being manifests Itself as a Person of infinite power so long as we are persons. . . To think of Him as the Formless Being is quite right. Take care, however, that you do not run away with the idea that that view alone is true and all others false. Meditating upon Him as a Being with form is equally right. But you must hold to your particular point of view until you realize, until you *see* God, then everything will become clear. Seek to know God and revere God. Love God. That is the duty nearest you. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

I know that Heaven has an intelligence which nothing escapes. I know that it regards all things; that it enters into all; that it is present incessantly to all. Heaven penetrates to the depths of all hearts, as day-break illumines the darkest room. We should strive to reflect its light, as two instruments in complete harmony respond to one another. —*Confucius.*

There is One Universal Soul diffused through all things; eternal, invisible, unchangeable; in essence like truth, in substance resembling light; not to be represented by any image; to be comprehended only by the mind; not, as some conjecture, exterior to the world, but in himself entire, pervading the universal sphere. —*Pythagoras.*

He knoweth the past and the future, but no one comprehends anything of His knowledge, except that which He revealeth. With God are the keys of the secret things, none knoweth them but He. . . . No vision taketh Him in, but He taketh in all vision. —*Koran.*

He whose nature is beyond our reach, whose being escapes our senses, who is invisible and eternal, He the All-pervading Spirit, whom the mind cannot grasp, even He shone forth.—*Code of Manu.*

God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in Truth.
—*Jesus the Christ.*

The reason which can be reasoned is not the Eternal Reason. The name which can be named is not the Eternal Name. —*Laotze.*

The height and depth of the world is centred in Thee, O Lord. I know not what Thou art. Thou art what Thou alone canst be.
—*Persian Scriptures.*

I am that which has been, which is and which will be; and no one has yet lifted the veil that covers Me. —*Egyptian Temple Inscription.*

I am the Origin of all, everything evolves from Me. Knowing this, the wise worship Me with loving ecstacy. With their heart fixed on Me, with their life absorbed in Me, mutually enlightening (one another) and perpetually singing My glory, they are contented and rejoiced. To these ever steadfast and loving worshippers, I give that Yoga of wisdom by which they come unto Me. Out of pure compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy the darkness born of ignorance by the effulgent light of wisdom.—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE PERSONAL GOD AND THE ABSOLUTE

Extract of Lecture by Sister Devamata

As water cannot rise higher than its source, so man cannot transcend the highest level of his understanding. What he is able to perceive in the world outside is measured by what he has perceived within. He can grasp only so much of the external universe as he has analyzed and understood within himself. The world he lives in is his own world and as he finds it good or evil, he draws the outlines of his own nature.

So is it with his conception of God. God is the whole. Man sees as much of Him as he chooses to make room for in his consciousness. The God of each one of us is always the reflection of our own mental development. If we remain on the plane of personality, bound by our lower self, we cannot hope to have any idea of the Absolute. So long as we cling to our human nature, our God must be a human God. Everywhere in the early stages of evolution, we find this tendency to merely inflate human attributes and powers and apply them to the Supreme. He is the Lord of Hosts, the Judge of Judges, the Ruler and Governor, the strongest of the strong—in other words, the largest thing we can think of, but always an expansion, an extension of our own human personality. In fact, so long as we name God, so long as we speak of Him at all, we are speaking of a personal God; for out of what has language itself grown? Out of our personal need. Therefore speech can never transcend the plane of personality. The story is told in the Upanishad of a father who, wishing to test the knowledge of his sons on their return from the house of their Teacher, asked each one: "What canst thou tell me of Brahman (the Absolute)?" The older boy replied by long quotations from the

Scriptures; "This Sage has defined Him in this way, another in that." But the father checked him saying: "It is clear that thou knowest nothing of Brahman." The younger boy, when questioned, hung his head and was silent. Whereupon the father, content, exclaimed: "I see, my son, that thou hast begun to have some idea of what God is."

The Infinite admits of no definition. The Absolute can never be grasped by the relative mind. Man must transcend himself to know God. It is in the rapt silence of the super-conscious that the last veil falls and the seeker beholds Him face to face. Until then, mere abstraction is not a substitute for Infinity. Intellectual dissection, divesting God of form and definite qualities, does not bring knowledge of the Absolute. When we have subtilized our idea to the ultimate point of vagueness, made our Deity a formless philosophic entity, if we analyze, we shall find that He is still a glorified image of ourself, the furthest point of vision possible to us, that which we are striving to manifest in our individual life.

It follows inevitably that the ignorant man cannot have the same conception of God as the wise. He can take only as much of the Divine as his limited mind can grasp. It is not superstition or religious degeneracy, it is true wisdom to give to each man the idea of God he can comprehend. However primitive it may be, let him serve it faithfully and it will lead him to the Infinite. It matters not where he fixes his mind, even on the crudest earthen image, God is there. We talk as if the universe were one thing and God another, as if to look for Him in creation were idolatry. But what sustains the universe? Whence has come the earth out of which the image is constructed? What makes it possible for those particles to stay together

as an image? What conceived even the simple idea which stands behind the image, if it is not the Supreme? He is literally there, not because man places Him there, but because He inheres there as the basis of every atom in the earth; and the truly devout worshipper can call Him out of that image as surely as out of subtler forms or realms. How foolish then to break the image and take away some humble soul's object of concentration. Let him rather kneel before it day after day. If he bows down with earnest, whole-hearted devotion, he has more chance of seeing God even in His Absolute form than you who break the image. Because it is not a question of getting a truer image, or of finding purer material out of which to make his image; it is a question of realizing an object in his own consciousness. And whatever starts him on the way, whatever helps him to make his mind one-pointed, that is of value and should not be destroyed. We should never try to impose our God on another or borrow his. Only that can be a true God for us which has sprung out of the depths of our own inner experience, the fruit of our own earnest searching

As a matter of fact, there is no difference in essence between one aspect of Divinity and another, between the formful and the formless God, the personal and the impersonal. What is the personal God? Just as much of the Absolute as each one can cover with his understanding; in other words, each person's vision of the Supreme. Let the understanding widen, more of the Absolute will be covered and the personal God for that one will grow proportionately vaster, mightier, more majestic. All spiritual growth is summed up in this, the covering day by day of more of the Absolute, moving towards the whole, passing from the particular

into the universal. So long as we cling obstinately to our present narrow vision of the Infinite, believing it to be the whole and trying to impose it on others, our progress must necessarily be slow and cramped. But when we cast aside all prejudice, learn to be humble and tolerant, and open ourselves to the larger view of things, then we move forward with amazing swiftness. Each time we touch the least of God, our nature is purified, we are able at once to perceive more of Him and this means the awakening of a new power of perception. We see a little of God, that God in us sees more of God at once, and again that sees still more of Him. Thus that which we started out to do for ourselves, the Infinite does for us.

It is the same as when the sun rises. Fogs and mists may screen it and the foolish man imagines that he must light a fire to dry them up; but in a few hours the sun of its own power has dissipated them and unveiled itself. So when we come in contact with this great Sun of the soul, the Infinite Divine Consciousness, it eats up all these clouds of ignorance that envelop us, the sky of our mind grows clear, our horizon line broadens; and as it expands, we rise into higher and higher states of consciousness, gaining an ever-widening vision of Divinity, until we reach the highest super-conscious state and behold the Supreme.

Then what happens? To know the Supreme means to become one with It, because only God can know God. "Then I must lose my individuality?" the timid soul asks. Necessarily something must go. You have been a limited entity. When you go out into the unlimited, how can you expect to keep your limited nature unaltered? What is the thing that shuts off God from you? What is it that you have been trying day by day to conquer?

What is that against which you are beating, which you are striving to break down? Your own little personality. The barrier of your ego. It alone stands between you and God; and only as you transcend it, can your consciousness expand. That which you are now, that which marks you as a person, how can you expect to take the Infinite into that? No, you must go out into It. This is inevitable, and people are frightened at the thought. They prefer to have only a little bit of God, and all of themselves. Yet it is against this partial, limited condition of the little self that they are blindly struggling; and it is the unrecognized longing for more and more of that undefined Absolute Good which causes all their unrest. But when they are told that they can get the whole of It, they draw back.

Have you found that as your consciousness has expanded through this one life, you have felt poorer for it? Has there ever come a time when you have said: "I am afraid to learn anything more lest I lose myself?" On the contrary, with growing understanding have you not also felt increasing wisdom, increasing power, increasing efficiency? Can you imagine, therefore, that that which has proved good all along the way, will not be good when the last barrier breaks and you attain that goal towards which through ages you have been travelling,—oneness with Eternal Life, Infinite Happiness, Unbroken Bliss? Can a sum of countless gains make a loss? Can ever-expanding consciousness end in darkness and unconsciousness? It is not possible. That which has led to more and more knowledge, must ultimately lead to unlimited knowledge; and in absolute knowledge alone is joy and strength. The man who turns back does not know himself, does not know why he is toiling and struggling.

He is the man who identifies himself with his body, who measures life by the narrow circle and environment in which he revolves today. He does not believe that he is actually created in the image of God, that Divinity is his real nature. He has not awakened to the fact that within him are infinite possibilities, that in his own being there is a Divine Power, which if he will only let it work freely, will lead him to the Absolute, that is, to absolute happiness, absolute existence, unlimited consciousness, to that which can never be destroyed or changed. And who is there who does not long for life which has no end, knowledge which has no limit, happiness which has no break? For this alone are we all striving; but we cannot attain it until we are willing to pass out boldly from time into eternity, from the finite into the infinite, from the relative into the absolute.

How can we do it? Not by a sudden jump. Nowhere in nature do we find evolution moving otherwise than by gradual consecutive steps; and the laws of nature are the same on all planes. Physical evolution has been a slow building up atom on atom; never a sudden expansion which would mean explosion, but a gradual spreading-out of consciousness. And so must it be in the evolution of our higher understanding. We must begin where we are. At the present moment we are far from the Absolute in our consciousness. We are bound fast to this relative plane, to these perishable bodies and all that is related to them; and when any teaching comes that seems to lead us away from these outer conditions and associations, we declare it dangerous. Just as dangerous as the Absolute is dangerous; as eternal life, universal love, unlimited knowledge are dangerous. Which is dangerous for you, ignorance or knowledge, death or life, this happiness of an hour or eternal happiness?

You must be willing to let yourself outgrow these ideas in which you are now so rooted. No longer live as if you were a body. How can you get the least conception of that which is beyond body, if you live day by day bound up in this physical organism? You must transcend the body and whenever it tries to fasten itself upon you, refuse to be claimed by it. But mere denial will not do. You can accomplish nothing by a negative process,—first destroying the body idea and then filling your mind with another; asceticism first and realization afterwards. No; you must go within and find something that is not body. Seek God and the rest will follow of itself. Let Truth drive out falsehood. Do not try to destroy the false and then go in search of the True.

Begin by spending some moments every day looking within for something in yourself which is not body. What is it which directs and moves this outer shell? Why not live in that and identify yourself with that? Why let the stronger thing in you be the slave of the weaker? Hold your thought there; develop the consciousness of that. Soon you will discover that this inner power of mind also does not act of itself, that behind it there is something still stronger. Identify yourself with that. Make both mind and body the servants of that. Then as you dwell on that, your consciousness will expand and you will begin to discern something behind which is yet mightier. Seize hold on that, follow that. Thus the daily journey inward will carry you further and further back, until at last you will reach the source of your being.

It is not enough, however, to set apart hours of the day to think about this. You must live it. If you are dealing all the time with personality, if all your thought and conversation are about people,

all your activity and interest in outward things, it will not be possible to transcend the plane of personality. If you would gain a larger, truer vision of God, your whole life must be a withdrawing from the personal, the limited.. You must cease to be petty and narrow in your judgments, in the demands you make upon others, in your standards and aims. Let no hatred or jealousy, no intolerance or condemnation, no discouragement or doubt rise in the mind. Where they are the Sun of Divine Consciousness can never shine. Learn to be God-like and God will reveal Himself in His true nature. Serve your present finite vision of the Infinite with faithful devotion and He will gradually unfold before you the fullness of His glory.

KENA UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART II

I

If thou thinkest "I know It well," then it is certain that thou knowest but little of the Brahman (the Absolute Truth), what form of Him thou art and in what form He (resideth) in the Devas (minor aspects of Deity). Therefore I think that what thou thinkest to be known is still to be sought after.

The teacher, having given the definition of the real Self or Brahman, by which mortals are able to see, hear, feel, think, was afraid that the disciple might conclude after merely hearing about It, that he had known that subtle Self; therefore he proceeds by saying: "If you have the idea that you know It, then you know very little. One cannot

even teach It. One can show the way, but it is a question of direct perception through unfoldment. You may have heard about It or read about It in books, but that is not enough. You must experience It, see It. Mere intellectual grasp or acceptance is not the way of true knowledge. Each one must find It out for himself."

This is the special characteristic of the ancient teaching. It is very easy for the disciple, after hearing the teacher, to think he knows; but the teacher can only show the way, the disciple must go on seeking until he attains. While you are listening, you may think: "Oh yes, I am the eye of the eye;" but when you try to define yourself, you will find that you are a very limited thing according to your own definition. Therefore intellectual recognition alone will not help you. You must practise. The previous chapter has shown that the knowledge of Atman or Brahman (the Higher Self or the Infinite), is beyond sense-perception. "There the eye does not go, nor speech, nor mind." "That is distinct from known and also It is beyond the unknown." Therefore it was necessary for the teacher to remind the disciple that knowledge based on sense-perception should not be confounded with that of the supersensuous state. The disciple had accepted what the teacher said. It had been made as clear to him as language could make it, but now it was necessary for him to prove it by his own experience. Thus guided by the teacher, the disciple sat in solitary contemplation, seeking the true meaning of Brahman within himself. Then, having gained a new vision, he approached the teacher once more.

II

(*The disciple said*:) *I do not think that I know It well, nor do I know that I do not know It. He among us who knows That, knows* (*what is meant by*) *"I know" and also* (*by*) *"I know not that I do not know It."*

This is very perplexing, for it seems to be contradictory, but it is not. From the previous chapter we have learned that Brahman is something different from the known, and beyond the unknown. The disciple realizing this, says: "As far as mortal conception is concerned, I do not think I know, for It is beyond mind and speech, limitless; yet it is not true that I do not know, for the very fact that I exist, that I am here in your presence, that I can seek It, shows that I know, for It is the source of my being. One who says "I do not know," can say it only from ignorance, for the very existence of a mortal shows that he knows. But I do not know in the sense of knowing the Whole, of comprehending the Infinite Ocean of existence." Who can even know the Atlantic ocean in its every part? Yet we do know its water and waves and general character. In the same way the disciple declares: "I know the varied forms of the phenomenal world which spring from the ocean of the Absolute. In that sense I know."

That is vast, That is infinite, beyond mind and speech. We cannot say It is good, we cannot say It is evil, because It is beyond all dualities. We cannot say It is light, we cannot say It is dark, because It is above light and darkness. The word knowledge is ordinarily used to signify knowledge of limited phenomena, and by this knowledge the Infinite cannot be known. Man must transcend this relative knowledge before he can have a clear

conception of God. One who wishes to attain soul-consciousness and immortality must rise above matter.

The word "know" is used here in the same sense as it is used in modern science. The observation of material science being confined to the sense-plane, it ignores what is beyond. Therefore it must always be limited and subject to change. It discovered atoms, then it went further and discovered electrons, and when it found the one, it had to drop the other; so this kind of knowledge can never be final, and therefore can never lead to the ultimate knowledge of the Infinite. Spiritual science is not merely a question of mind and brain, it depends on the awakening of our latent higher consciousness.

III

It is thought by him by whom It is not thought (because beyond thought). He by whom It is thought, knows It not. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know.

By this text the teacher confirms the idea that Brahman is unthinkable, because unconditioned. Therefore he says: It is thought by him by whom It is not thought, that is, he who considers It beyond thought, beyond sense-perception, beyond mind and speech, he alone has a true understanding of Brahman. They who judge a living being from his external form and sense faculties, know him not; because the real Self of man is not manifested in his seeing, hearing, speaking. His real Self is that within by which he hears and speaks and sees. In the same way, he knows not Brahman who thinks he knows It by name and form. The ordinary point of view is that God can be known through the study of books; but being able to quote from the Scriptures and discourse learnedly about

Him does not give the knowledge of the Supreme. The arrogant and foolish man thinks he knows everything; but the true knower is humble. He says: "How can I know Thee, Thou who art beyond mind and speech, Infinite?" In the last portion of the text, the teacher draws an impressive contrast between the attitude of the wise man who knows, but thinks he does not know; and that of the ignorant who does not know, but thinks he knows.

IV

It (Brahman) is known when It is known as the Witness of every state of consciousness. (Through such knowledge) one attains immortality. By this Self one attains strength and by knowledge immortality is attained.

We have learned from the previous text that the Brahman is unknown to those whose knowledge is limited to sense experience; but He is not unknown to those whose purified intelligence perceives Him as the Witness of all states of consciousness and the Essence of all things. By this knowledge one attains immortality, because although the material form may change and the body may decay and die, the subtle essence of our being remains untouched. Therefore he whose knowledge is based upon direct perception of this undying essence, transcends all fear of death and becomes immortal. He also acquires unlimited strength, because he identifies himself with the source of all things. The strength which comes from one's own muscle and brain or from one's individual power, must be limited and mortal and therefore cannot lift one beyond death; but through that strength which *Atma-Jnana* or Self-knowledge gives, immortality is reached.

V

If one knows (That) here, that is Truth (the goal of life); if one knows It not here, then there is great destruction (rounds of birth and death). The wise seeing the same Self in all beings, having departed from this world, become immortal.

(To be concluded in November.)

NEW BOOKS

"La Voie de la Devotion," a translation of "The Path of Devotion" by Swami Paramananda, has just been received from its Swiss publisher, Theo. Sack-Reymond of Lausanne. The lucidity and grace of the French translation lend new beauty to the forceful and inspiring words of the original, which has already helped so many hundred striving souls that it is now in its third edition. The present volume is brought out in an unusually attractive form and comes not merely as an old friend in a new dress, but as a new friend with a charm all its own. (Price 75 cents. Postage 4 cents).

A sister volume, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness," by the same author appeared in September. It is of a deeply devotional nature and no one can read its pages without feeling a quickening of spiritual fervor and understanding. Each chapter opens with helpful quotations from the Eastern Scriptures and a prayer, while every line is full of instructive and life-giving teaching. The book can well serve as a manual of daily devotions. One passage reads: "Our duty is to harmonize, to sympathize, but never to antagonize. Some times it may take long to make people understand a great Ideal; but patience, perseverance and love conquer everything in the end. It is good to give people joy and happiness, but it is infinitely greater to be able to help them through the light of understanding, because the light of Truth saves one from many rounds of birth and death and gives eternal bliss."

NOTICE

During the month of October Swami Paramananda will conduct the following Services and Classes at the Vedanta Centre of Boston: Sunday 11 A. M. Service with Lecture and at 5 P. M. Vesper Service; Tuesday 8 P. M. Class Lecture on the Bhagavad-Gita; Thursday 8 P. M. Yoga Class. The subjects for the lectures on Sunday morning will be: "What is Vedanta?" "The Motherhood of God," "Value of Concentration," "Right Thinking and Right Living."

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. NOVEMBER, 1913. No. 11.

What dignifies and distinguishes the science of today is its effort to find the unit, the point of convergence in the endless divergence of nature. In so doing, it has completed an age-long circle and returned to the Vedic method of the early Indo-Aryans. The whole search of those ancient Himalayan Rishis or Seers was for the One; and their science, religion and philosophy grew up out of their earnest longing to find that One. In times too remote for history, they proclaimed what modern science has only recently discovered,—that there is but one force in the universe, the centripetal; and that that which seems to be centrifugal is only the counter-action of another centre of gravity. So is it also with man, they said. One force alone operates within him. His natural course is inward, centripetal, Godward; but he is kept revolving in a distant orbit by the play of the external world upon him. Remove its attraction; at once he will fly towards the centre and realize union with his source. By the very law of nature, this will accomplish itself ultimately. The weaker centre of gravity must inevitably be overpowered by the stronger; the infinite must conquer the finite. Hence Vedanta declares that every soul will finally reach perfection. But each one can

hasten this hour by voluntarily resisting the deflecting influence of his own lower nature and yielding himself up to the in-drawing power of the great Divine Central Will; or, as all the great Teachers have taught it, by learning to say and live: "Not I, O Lord! but Thou."

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

The perfect liberation of the Soul is within the reach of him alone who, being convinced that God is the Disposer of all things, hath learned the lesson of complete self-abnegation and absolute forgetfulness of "I," "Me," "Mine."

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

The Scripture and the Faith and the Truth say: Sin is nought else, but that the creature turneth away from the unchangeable Good and betaketh itself to the changeable; that is to say, that it turneth away from the Perfect to "that which is in part" and imperfect, and most often to itself. . . What did the devil do else, or what was his going astray and his fall else, but that he claimed for himself to be also somewhat, and would have it that somewhat was his, and somewhat was due to him? This setting up of a claim and his I and Me and Mine, these were his going astray and his fall. And thus it is to this day.

—*Theologica Germanica.*

But when, following the invisible steps of thought, we come to enquire whence is matter? and whereto? many truths arise out of the recesses of consciousness. We learn that the highest is present to the soul of man, that the real universal essence, which is not wisdom, or love, or power,

but all in one, and each entirely, is that for which all things exist, and that by which they are; that spirit creates, that behind nature, throughout nature spirit is present. As a plant upon the earth, so a man rests upon the bosom of God: he is nourished by unfailing fountains and draws at his need, inexhaustible power.

The Soul gives itself alone, original and pure, to the Lonely, Original and Pure, who on that condition, gladly inhabits, leads, and speaks through it. Then it is glad, young, and nimble. Behold, it saith, I am born into the great, the universal mind. I, the imperfect, adore my own perfect. I am somehow recipient of the great soul. So I come to live in thoughts, and act with energies, which are immortal.

—*Emerson.*

SELF-ABNEGATION AND REALIZATION.

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Without absolute self-abnegation no one can realize God. You must know that you are utterly powerless, worthless, that of yourself you can do nothing. Until you recognize this, the realization of God will not come. You may regard yourself to be a learned scholar, to be healthy, to be rich, to be an honorable man; but all this is merely a phantasm. The time is near at hand when you will be disabused of this idea. Your health may be destroyed, your riches swept away, your social standing may be impaired. Or if you keep them, you will begin to say to yourself: "I have wealth, but perhaps that man who is poor is better off than I because he has health; or I have health,

social position, but there is a person who seems happier than I without them."

If a man has the power to see things as they should be seen, to analyze himself properly, to analyze his mind properly, he will understand that he is absolutely in the hands of a Power who uses him as It pleases and whom he is powerless to resist. Then he says: "When man's vanity is puffed up by beauty, name, fame, wealth, he has no hope to reach Thee, O Lord! Thou art the property of those who have none else to call their own. Thou belongest to the poor, the lowly, to those who have nothing in this world. Therefore come to me, O Lord! All that I have is Thine. It never was mine. Thou art all my wealth!"

Health, wealth, beauty, property are really not friendly to man. They rather mislead him. They may seem to bring him happiness for a time; but at last he will have to confess that although he knows what is right, he has no power to do it; that he is too weak to lift himself up. Hence self-surrender is the only path for him. So he gives himself up entirely to the Lord. And in so doing, he is really not the loser. He actually gains, for he is a person who commits all sorts of blunders, while God never commits a blunder. If he directs himself, where will he go? To the grave-yard, to the cremation ground. But the one who is guided by God knows that there is no death for him. He understands himself to be self-luminous, self-existent; sword cannot cut him, fire cannot burn him, water cannot wet him, air cannot dry him; he is birthless, deathless, eternal and changeless. He knows that for him death is only throwing away a worn-out cloth to get a new one. People think that death is being no more. Those who think thus make much of health, wealth, beauty and

property; and when they care for these, that means that they identify themselves with their bodies.

The man who is vain on account of his wealth, on account of his health, on account of his beauty or learning, what does he gain? Even if he can read all the Vedas, he is not qualified to know the Truth. All this only increases his vanity. Sri Ramakrishna used to compare such vain pandits to vultures, who, although they soar high in the sky, always have their minds on the carrion pits on the earth. This is no learning. The real learning is that which will enable a man to realize the Truth. Our Master used to say: Repeating "Food, food, food," will not appease your hunger; so repeating the texts of books will not appease your spiritual hunger. Your hunger will be satisfied only when you see God. God is that food, eating which you will never hunger again. God is that drink, drinking which you will never thirst again. You imagine that unless you have health, wealth, beauty and property, you cannot be happy. But you have actually need of nothing. You are already complete and perfect. You are now really omnipotent, really omniscient, and you have forgotten it. You have thrown away the diamond and are making much of a pebble in the street. You have given up your omniscience, and are thinking yourself a scholar with a little learning, belonging to a certain community, a Brahmin, a limited being three and a half cubits in length. No; you are infinitely better than all this. When you once understand this, then you will not be content with these little things. You will say: "Not only this wealth is mine, but I possess the wealth of the

whole universe, for God Himself is my wealth. He is my father and my mother, and all my relatives."

When a man comes thus to identify himself with the universal Power, then he sees that nothing really belongs to him, that he does not really belong to himself, that all belongs to that Power; and he says: "Now I have found out that nothing belongs to me. This body is not mine; if it were, I could do with it what I chose. This mind is not mine, for I have no power to control it. Am I in any way then my own master? No; for I must go away whenever that Power wills. Then I must be the property of that Power, since He does with me whatever He chooses. When man knows thus that he is nobody, that he can do nothing for himself, at that moment God comes and says: "Now he is not trying to guide himself, so I will guide him. I have been guiding him all the while but he did not know it. Now let him see that I am doing it." So God begins to walk with his legs, to work with his hands, He begins to see through his eyes, to hear through his ears, to speak through his mouth, to think through his mind; and the man becomes a saint. He speaks like God, he looks like God, he acts like God; and he makes himself blissful and all others blissful. But this can be reached only by complete self-denial. Say: "I have nothing. This little beauty is not mine; I am eternally beautiful. This little span of life is not mine, my life has no beginning and no end. My knowledge is not this little limited knowledge, but it is infinite."

Why should you throw away your perfect nature and take an imperfect nature? Why do you give up your infinite life for this perishable life of a

few years? You have degraded yourself so low that you cannot fall any lower. The omnipotent, omniscient, immortal, eternal being is imagining that he dies, that he is limited, ignorant, weak and helpless.

You are pure, you are perfect. Hear it from one who has realized it and try to realize it yourself. You are pure, you are spotless. Do not give way to false imaginations. This false imagining will make you what you are imagining yourself to be. You are like the man who has received the false news that all his property has been lost and he begins to weep: "All my fortune is gone, how shall I live? What shall I do?" While all the time his lands and money are there just as before. So you are imagining that you are poor and helpless.

You have not lost your infinite glory; but the false news has been brought you and so you have been imagining yourself weak, miserable, imperfect. Now the good news that you are not all this comes to you from the great teachers, like Sri Krishna, Christ, Sri Ramakrishna. Believe them when they tell you that you are absolutely perfect, all-knowing, all-blissful and immortal.

THE LITTLE LAMP

I keep a little lamp alight,
All day, all night.
The moon can quench it not, nor sun;
It shines before the Holy One.
O, my soul's light,
Burn bright!

—H. P. K.

KENA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated By

SWAMI PARAMANANDA.

(*Concluded*)

PART III.

I.

The Brahman once won a victory for the Devas. Through that victory of the Brahman, the Devas became glorified. They thought, "This victory is ours. This glory is ours."

Brahman here does not mean a personal Deity. There is a Brahma, the first person of the Hindu Trinity; but Brahman is the Absolute, the One without a second, the Essence of all. There are different names and forms which represent certain personal aspects of Divinity, such as Brahma the Creator, Vishnu the Preserver and Siva the Transformer; but no one of these can fully represent the Whole. Brahman is the vast ocean of being, on which rise numberless ripples and waves of manifestation. From the smallest atomic form to the highest form of a Deva or an angel, all spring from that limitless ocean of Brahman, the inexhaustible Source of life. No manifested form of life can be independent of this source, just as no wave, however mighty, can be independent of the ocean. Nothing moves without that Power. He is the only Doer. But the Devas thought: "This victory is ours, this glory is ours."

II.

The Brahman perceived this and appeared before them. They did not know Him and exclaimed: "What mysterious form is this?"

III.

They said to Fire: "O Jataveda (All-Knowing)! Find out what mysterious spirit this is." He said "Yes."

IV.

He ran toward That (spirit) and He (Brahman) said to him: "Who art thou?" "I am Agni, I am Jataveda," he (Fire) replied.

V.

Brahman asked: "What power resides in thee?" Agni replied: "I can burn up all whatever exists on earth."

VI.

Brahman placed a straw before him and said: "Burn this." He (Fire) rushed towards it with all speed, but was not able to burn it. So he returned from there and said (to the Devas): "I was not able to find out what this great mystery is."

VII.

Then they said to Vayu (Air): "O Vayu! Find out what this mysterious spirit is." He said "Yes."

VIII.

He ran toward That (spirit) and He (Brahman) said to him: "Who art thou?" "I am Vayu, I am Matarisva," he (Air) said.

IX.

Then the Brahman said: "What power is in thee?" Vayu replied: "I can blow away all whatsoever exists on earth."

X.

Brahman placed a straw before him and said: "Blow it away." He (Vayu) rushed towards it with all speed, but was not able to blow it away. So he returned from there and said (to the Devas): "I was not able to find out what this great mystery is."

XI.

Then they said to Indra: "O Magavan (Worshipful One)! Find out what this mysterious spirit is." He said "Yes," and ran towards That, but That (Brahman) disappeared from before him.

XII.

Then he saw in that very space a woman beautifully adorned, Uma of golden hue, daughter of Haimevat (Himalayas). He said: "What mysterious great spirit was that?"

Here we see how the Absolute assumes concrete form to give knowledge of Himself to the earnest seeker. We cannot know Him except through His manifested forms. So Brahman, the impenetrable Mystery, disappeared and in His place appeared a personal form to represent Him. This is a subtle way of showing the difference between the Absolute and the Personal God. The Absolute is declared to be unknowable and unthinkable, but He assumes deified personal aspects to make Himself known to His devotees. In this way you find that Vedanta tolerates all aspects and manifestations of Deity. It proclaims a God both with form and formless. This may seem like a contradiction. How can the formless have form? It would be contradictory, if we were talking about an ordinary individual. But God, Who is limitless, must be both formless and with form; and if there is anything beyond, He must also be that. Such is the definition of God according to Vedanta.

Now when Brahman disappeared, Indra, the Lord of the Devas, beheld a beautiful form, Uma, daughter of the Himalayas. The Himalayas stand as the symbol of the Eternal, Unchangeable One; and Uma as the personal aspect or the offspring of that Infinite Being.

PART IV.

I.

She (Uma) said: "It is Brahman. It is through the triumph of Brahman ye are triumphant." Then from Her words, he (Indra) knew that it (that mysterious form) was Brahman.

Uma replied to Indra, "It is Brahman indeed, who conquered the enemies of the Devas. It is through His power that you live and act. He is the agent and you are all only instruments in His hands. Therefore your idea that 'This victory is ours, this glory is ours,' is based on unwisdom." At once Indra saw their mistake. The Devas being puffed up with vanity, had thought they themselves had achieved the victory, whereas it was Brahman; for not even a blade of grass can move without Him. He is the only doer.

II.

Therefore these Devas,—Agni, Vayu and Indra, excel other (Devas), because they came nearer to Brahman. It was they who first knew this spirit as Brahman.

III.

Therefore Indra excels (all) other (Devas), because he came nearest to Brahman and because he first knew this spirit as Brahman.

One who depends on God but never on himself, his vision must be more inclusive, more powerful, because spirit is always more potent than matter. Our mind fails, our body fails, but the spirit never fails. Therefore he becomes great who depends on spirit. For this reason Agni, Vayu and Indra were superior to the other Devas because they came nearer to Brahman, that is, they gained a closer vision, and they were able to do this because they were purer; while Indra stands as the head of the Devas, because he came nearest of all. The significance of this is that whoever comes in direct touch with Brahman or the Supreme is glorified. Thus Indra excelled all others because his knowledge was first-hand; he reached Brahman, he realized the Truth directly.

IV.

Thus the teaching of Brahman is here illustrated in regard to the Devas. He flashed like lightning and appeared and disappeared just as the eye winks.

The teaching as regards the Devas was that Brahman was the only doer. He had appeared before them in a mysterious form; but the whole of the unfathomable Brahman could not be seen in any definite form; so at the moment of vanishing, He manifested more of His immeasurable glory and fleetness of action by a sudden dazzling flash of lightning.

V.

Next (the teaching) is regarding Adhya-Atman (the embodied soul). The mind seems to approach Him (Brahman). By this mind (the seeker) again and again remembers and thinks about Brahman.

Only by the mind can the seeker after knowledge approach this Brahman, whose nature has been described in glory and speed as like unto a flash of lightning. Mind only can picture the indescribable Brahman; and mind alone being speedy in its nature, can follow Him. It is through the help of this mind that we can think and meditate on Brahman; and when by constant thought of Him the mind becomes purified, then like a polished mirror, it can reflect His Divine Glory.

VI.

That Brahman is called Tadvanam (object of worship). (Therefore) He is to be worshipped by the name Tadvanam. He who thus knows Brahman is sought after by all beings.

Brahman is the object of adoration and the goal of all beings. Therefore He should be worshipped and meditated on as *Tadvanam,* that is, One who is to be adored as the Self of all living creatures. He who thus realizes Brahman, to him all crea-

tures come to gain the fulfilment of their desires, as they go or pray to the Lord Himself. The knower of Brahman becomes one with Him, and serves as an open channel through which the blessings of Brahman flow out to others. He who has realized the Truth is loved by the Truth. He who recognizes Truth, Truth recognizes him. It is always mutual; as the Blessed Lord says in the Bhagavad-Gita: "He who sees Me in all and all in Me, from him I vanish not, nor does he vanish from Me." One who knows Brahman, he dwells in Brahman and he is loved by all living beings.

VII.

(The disciple asked:) O Master, instruct me regarding the Upanishad. (The teacher replied:) The Upanishad has been told to thee. We have certainly told thee the Upanishad (wisdom) of Brahman.

VIII.

The Upanishad is based on tapas (practice of the control of body, mind and senses), dama (subjugation of the senses), karma (right performance of prescribed actions), on the Vedas and their limbs (different branches). Truth is its abode.

IX.

He who knows this (wisdom of the Upanishad), having been cleansed of all sin, becomes established in the blissful, eternal and highest abode of Brahman, in the abode of Brahman.

Here ends this Upanishad.

SUMMARY.

This Upanishad is called Kena, because it begins with the inquiry: "By whom (Kena) willed or directed (Ishitam) does the mind go towards its object?" From whom comes life? Who enables man to speak, to hear and see? Thus the disciple

questions his Master regarding the Final Cause of all things, and the teacher in reply gives him the definition of Brahman, the source and basis of existence. The spirit of the Upanishads is always to show that no matter where we look, what we see or what we feel, whatever there is in the visible world, it all proceeds from one Source. The prevailing note of all Vedic teaching is this: One tremendous Whole becoming the world, and again the world disappearing in that one Whole. It also strives in various ways to define that Source, knowing which all else is known and without which no knowledge can be well-established. So here the teacher replies: "That which is the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, That is the inexhaustible river of being which flows on eternally, while bubbles of creation rise on the surface, live for a time, then burst."

The teacher, however, warns the disciple that this eye, ear, mind, never perceive It; for It is That which illumines speech and mind, which enables eye and ear and all sense-faculties to perform their tasks. "It is distinct from the known and also It is beyond the unknown." He who thinks he knows It, knows It not; because It is never known by those who believe that It can be grasped by the intellect or by the senses; but It can be known by him who knows It as the witness of all states of consciousness. The knower of Truth or Brahman, although he has attained the knowledge of the Supreme, says "I know It not," because he realizes that he knows only some limited aspects of Divinity, Who is unconditioned and unlimited. He who thus knows him, declares: "Thou art this (the visible), Thou art That (the invisible), and Thou art all that is beyond." The ordinary idea of knowledge is that which is based on sense-

perceptions; but the knowledge of an illumined Sage is not confined to his senses. He has all the knowledge that comes from the senses and all that comes from spirit; yet he realizes that he cannot know the Supreme wholly, because all phenomenal knowledge is limited and God is infinite. "I know it all"—that is the expression of the ordinary mind; but the mind which is serene and illumined, says: "I know and I do not know. Thou art unfathomable and indescribable, vast, supreme."

The special purpose of this Upanishad is to give us the knowledge of the Real, that we may not come under the dominion of the ego by identifying ourselves with our body, mind and senses. Mortals become mortals because they fall under the sway of ego and depend on their own limited physical and mental forces. The significance of the parable of the Devas and Brahman is that there is no real Power, no real Doer except God. He is the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear; and eyes, ears and all our faculties have no value independent of Him. When we thus realize Him as the underlying Reality of our being, then we transcend death and become immortal.

REPORTS

A terrible flood recently swept over a portion of the province of Bengal in India. The Ramakrishna Mission according to its usual custom, at once sent bands of workers to the afflicted districts and the following report of their work has just reached us: "The water is subsiding slowly but there will be no crops for some time to come. The people are dying by inches and there are thousands all around whose emaciated appearance strikes the visitor with horror. The cattle, too, are dying everywhere for want of food. No government relief

has yet been opened. Reaching Bhagabanpur on the 19th of August, our workers began by distributing the provisions supplied by Babu Bijoy Chandra Singha. The Mission has undertaken to spend 400 Rupees weekly through this centre, but a hundred such centres will not be adequate to meet the pressing demand." The Mission sent another band to the flood-swept villages about Khanakul to distribute foodstuffs provided by a number of Calcutta merchants, while other parties were dispatched to many other districts. At Autpur alone between Aug. 12th and Aug. 25th the total number of persons relieved was 2,500. "The Mission is arranging to open other centres in the interior, where there is greater suffering. The work will have to be continued for some months to come and we look to the generosity of the public to support us in this undertaking." Any offering, however small, towards the relief fund will be thankfully received by the Editor of *"The Message of the East,"* 16 St. Botolph St., Boston, Mass., and forwarded promptly to India.

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service at Vrindavan, recently issued, shows that during the year 5906 in and out patients were treated, among them being 15 Christians and 153 Mohammedans, besides Hindus of every caste.

* * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston during October four meetings were held each week by the Swami Paramananda—two services every Sunday, a class for the study of the Bhagavad-Gita on Tuesday, and the regular Student's Class on Thursday. The same program will be followed through November. The subjects for the Sunday lectures will be—"The Bhagavad-Gita," "Reincarnation," "Self-Mastery," "Fear is Death" and "Tolerance."

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. II. DECEMBER, 1913 No. 12

Gautama Buddha declared to His disciples: "Buddha is the name of infinite knowledge, infinite as the sky. I, Gautama, have reached that; so you will all reach it; struggle for that." The term "Christ," too, we know has much the same signification. A Christian or a Buddhist, therefore, is strictly speaking a seeker after enlightenment, not a follower of a personality; and only as he attains that state can he justly bear the name. Birth or creed cannot give it to him. Mere belief in the Divinity of Jesus or any Savior has in itself no saving grace. Their power of salvation lies in the fact that They hold up to mankind a definite Ideal to follow, a definite precept to practise, "that all men may become Buddhas," as the Sakyamuni Himself proclaimed. They show the way to Buddhahood, to Christhood. And only those who travel the way and attain that state can be truthfully called their followers.

This state, furthermore, must be the same for all men, whatever the form of faith. Knowledge or enlightenment is not differentiated by the method taken to gain it. To know is to know. And he who knows God is at the same time a true Chris-

tian, a true Buddhist and a true follower of every Savior. "Shall we say, then, that there were no Christians before Christ, and that there are no Christians outside of what we call Christendom?" Dr. Minot Savage asks in one of his sermons, "Augustine was wiser than that. He refers somewhere to that which has always been in the world from the beginning, and which, in these latter days, we have come to call Christian. So Augustine, the old Church Father and theologian, recognized that what we regarded as important and essential in Christianity was older than what had gone by that name . . . The ideal man is the man who loves, and the man who knows how to apply his love power and impetus in such a way as to help, save, transform, develop and glorify mankind . . . and I think the man who embodies these three things is a Christian, whatever he believes else."

The German philosopher, Lessing, teaches a like lesson in his play, "Nathan the Wise." "Why, Nathan, you are a Christian," one of the characters exclaims in reply to certain noble thoughts expressed by the Jew. "What makes of me a Christian in your eyes makes you a Jew in mine," was Nathan's answer. The same lofty Ideal was held by both, each gave it his own name. All noble Ideals must be close akin, because of their relation to the Ultimate Ideal, which can be but One. There is a brotherhood of Saviors as truly as there is a fatherhood of the God, whom They show forth. And when the same brotherhood will be manifest in the followers who bear their names, without regard to land or race or creed, then alone will Their mission be accomplished on earth.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

God is indeed infinite. But He is omnipotent. He may so order that His Divinity as Love may be manifest in the flesh and be among us as God Incarnate. Divine Incarnation is a fact. It is a fact to be seen and realized by the spiritual eyes. God incarnateth Himself and becometh man in order to teach what is True Knowledge, what again is True Devotion or Love of God.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

The idea of a man being worshipped as God—especially a living man—has in it something paradoxical and revolting, but the following considerations must be examined before we pronounce judgment respecting it. The conception of Spirit involves its being regarded as inherently, intrinsically universal. This condition must be particularly observed, and it must be discovered how in the systems adopted by various peoples this universality is kept in view. It is not the individuality of the subject that is revered, but that which is universal in him; and which, among the Thibetans, Hindoos, and Asiatics generally, is regarded as the essence pervading all things. *Hegel.*

There is one God, passionless, formless, uncreated, the Universal Soul, the Supreme Spirit, the All-pervading, whose shadow is the world; who has become incarnate and done many things, only for the love that He bears to His faithful people; all-gracious and compassionate to the humble; restorer of the past; protector of the poor; all-good, all-powerful. In Him centre all knowledge and virtue, and by His Truth the dullness of material creation shines bright as the Ideal.

—*Tulsi Das* (Hindu Saint of the 16th Century.)

Those . . . . . that are called *Heroes full of goodness and light* think without ceasing on their Creator, and are all resplendent with the light that reflects from the felicity they enjoy in Him. For being united to God as middle Essences, and having received the grace of being always turned towards Him, without its being in their power ever to depart or go astray from Him, they continue always in the presence of this First Being . . . . . And, therefore, they are with reason called *Excellent Heroes,* the epithet that signifies *excellent,* intimating to us by its root, that they are full of goodness and of understanding; and the word *Heroes,* coming from a word that signifies "love," to show us that, full of love for God, their whole endeavors are to assist us in our passage through this terrestrial life to a life divine, and to help us to become citizens of Heaven.

—*Hierocles.*

For the soul of Christ received grace in such a manner that from it, in a measure, grace overflowed upon others. And hence it was necessary that he should have the greatest grace; just as fire, which is the cause of heat in all warm things, is hot in the highest degree, ... Inasmuch, also, as he is man, it belongs to him to join men to God, by showing the precepts and gifts of God to men and making satisfaction and intercession in men's behalf. And hence he is most truly called mediator as man.

—*St. Thomas Aquinas.*

The ignorant, unaware of My Supreme state, as the great Lord of beings, disregard Me dwelling in human form.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE PRACTICE OF THE CHRIST-IDEAL

Extract from Lecture by Swami Paramananda

God manifests in the form of a man that man may comprehend what God is. The Absolute is declared to be unknowable and unthinkable, hence He is beyond the reach of the human mind. But to make it possible for man to understand Him, He assumes personal aspects and comes as a Christ or a Buddha. This is what is meant by a Divine Incarnation. Such a manifestation serves as the connecting link between God and man. He is Divine enough to be in touch with God and human enough to be in touch with man, so that man may realize Divine things through Him.

To truly grasp what an Incarnation is, however, we must have like qualities and show them forth in our lives. The words and actions of a great teacher no one can wholly understand until he has risen to the same plane of spiritual consciousness. When we have the same thing in us that was in Christ or in Buddha, then it is possible for us to comprehend what they taught. Until then, what they say and do must remain a closed chapter. We can never draw the picture of a great Being either to satisfy ourselves or others until we have the same qualities. One who speaks of Christ must himself be Christ-like in his life, love and wisdom, else his words will carry but little weight. When our inner being becomes attuned with the Supreme then alone can we express Him in our words and actions. That is why all the Divine Seers unanimously declare the absolute need of the practical application of Spiritual teaching. "Being and becoming" is the watchword of the sages. Let your light shine, that light within, the light of your living soul, let that shine forth, then all the clouds of doubt and ignorance will be dispelled and you will

be able to comprehend the Divine. When your heart becomes pure you must see God. No one can prevent you. No church, no priest, nothing can keep you from seeing God.

To the majority the Christ-consciousness or the direct perception of Truth seems something unattainable. But that cannot be. What has happened once will happen again. What has been done can be done: that is the law. The purpose of a Divine Incarnation is not merely to manifest His superhuman and miraculous powers, but to point out to mankind by His life and example the goal of existence and man's Divine birthright. Saviors do not come to proclaim things which are impossible for man to attain. No, we think them impossible because we do not try to practise them, so our religion degenerates into a blind and thoughtless acceptance of certain fixed forms and doctrines. When religion thus becomes a matter of mere belief and exists only as a theory, having lost its living quality, then God incarnates in human form to re-establish spirituality and destroy materialism. As it is declared in the Bhagavad-Gita:

"Though I am unborn and of unchangeable nature, and though I am Lord of all beings, yet by ruling over my Prakriti (Nature) I come into being by my own Maya (Mysterious power). Whenever there is decline of virtue and predominance of vice, then I embody Myself. For the protection of the good and for the destruction of evil-doers and for the re-establishment of Dharma (virtue and religion) I am born from age to age."

Thus God manifests Himself at different periods of history in order to give tangible knowledge of His Divine nature. To make things that are incomprehensible to the finite mind, comprehensible, He takes finite form. He comes not to display His

own glory; no, but to show man how as man he can manifest God; or as St. Augustine puts it—"God was made man that man might become God."

The purpose of the life and teaching of a great Savior is to open man's eyes to his own higher Self, to awaken more love for God than for mundane things; or in other words, to make a mortal feel conscious of his immortal nature. In order to gain this consciousness and make it a part of our being we must learn to practise the Christ-Ideal in our everyday life. We must picture it. We must make it living to our heart. We must feel its reality. As we cultivate this habit of feeling the living Presence within, our vision will become more and more open to subtle spiritual facts, which otherwise remain vague and unreal. People's sight varies. Things which we may see plainly are not visible to the blind man; so in the days of our inner blindness, we cannot see God or understand His manifestations. This was the case with the Scribes and Pharisees, who although scholarly men possessing the full knowledge of the letter, yet failed to understand Christ because they lacked that inner light which comes only through practise of the spirit. With most people the spiritual life is a matter of theory. They have just a little intellectual grasp of it; that is quite enough for them. But practice is the whole of it and not having practical experience in religion, we can never penetrate the inner depths of anything.

One man may go to church, pray and sing hymns in the name of Jesus, appearing righteous, but this cannot make him spiritual or bring him blessing so long as he does not manifest the teaching in his life; and there may be another who may never go to a church or utter the name of Christ, but who through the practice of holiness and purity so em-

bodies and radiates the Christ-spirit that he becomes a living symbol of the Christ-life. Such a soul alone truly honors Him and proves a worthy follower. As it is said in one of the Buddhist Sacred Books: "Now it is not thus, Ananda, that the Tathagata (Incarnate One) is rightly honored, reverenced, venerated, held sacred and revered. But the brother or the sister, the devout man or the devout woman, who continually fulfils all the greater and the lesser duties, who is correct in life, walking according to the precepts, it is he who rightly honors, reverences, venerates, holds sacred and reveres the Incarnate One with the worthiest homage."

We do not honor our Savior by merely belonging to a creed founded in His name or by offering Him lip-praise. Only as we learn to shape our lives after the model of His own do we show ourselves worthy of Him; and this can be done only by living His teachings. Jesus the Christ Himself taught this lesson to His disciples, when He said to them: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Every one that cometh unto me, and heareth my words, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like: he is like a man building a house, who digged and went deep and laid a foundation upon the rock: and when a flood arose, the stream broke against the house and could not shake it; because it had been well builded. But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that built a house upon the earth without a foundation; against which the stream brake, and straightway it fell in; and the ruin of that house was great."

THE SAVIORS

The splendor of the saviors of the world
Hath shone about me. I have stretched my hands,
Have heard the music of their soft commands,
And seen their wide, unfathomed eyes aglow.
Gods have descended to me from the skies,
Through chant and prayer, incense and sacrifice.
Through the mysterious murmur of the rite
They have descended low to bless my sight.
And their strong words have stricken to my heart,
And in their strength I have walked through many days,
Lost in a dream of hope, rapt and apart.
O, high-uplifted Ones, loud be your praise!

H. P. K.

THE GREAT WORLD-TEACHERS

Extracts by Swami Vivekananda

Most of us are born believers in a personal religion. We talk of principles, we think of theories, and that is all right; but every thought and every movement, every one of our actions shows, that we can only understand the principle when it comes to us through a person. We can grasp an idea only when it comes to us through a materialized ideal person. We can understand the precept only through the example. Would to God that all of us were so developed that we would not require any example, would not require any persons. But we are not; and, naturally, the vast majority of mankind have put their souls at the feet of these extraordinary personalities, the Prophets, the Incarnations of God,—Incarnations worshipped by the Christians, by the Buddhists, and by the Hindus. . . These are the sign-posts here and there, which point to the march of humanity; these are verily gigantic, their shadows covering the earth,—they

stand undying, eternal! As it has been said by Jesus of Nazareth: "No man has seen God at any time, but through the Son." And that is true. And where shall we see God but in the Son? It is true that you and I, and the poorest of us, the meanest even, embody that God, even reflect that God. The vibration of light is everywhere, omnipresent; but we have to strike the light of the lamp before we can see the light. The Omnipresent God of the universe cannot be seen until He is reflected by these giant lamps of the earth,—the Prophets, the man-Gods, the Incarnations, the embodiments of God. . .

We all know that God exists, and yet we do not see Him, we do not understand Him. Take one of these great Messengers of light, compare His character with the highest ideal of God that you ever formed, and you will find that your God falls short of the ideal, and that the character of the Prophet exceeds your conceptions. You cannot even form a higher ideal of God than what the actually embodied have practically realized, and set before us as an example. Is it wrong, therefore, to worship these as God? Is it a sin to fall at the feet of these man-Gods, and worship them as the only Divine beings in the world? If they are really, actually, higher than all our conceptions of God, what harm is there in worshipping them? Not only is there no harm, but it is the only possible and positive way of worship. However much you may try, by struggle, by abstraction, by whatsoever method you like, still so long as you are a man in the world of man, your world is human, your religion is human, and your God is human. And that must be so. Who is not practical enough to take up an actually existing thing, and give up an idea which is only an abstraction, which he can-

not grasp, and is difficult of approach except through a concrete medium? Therefore, these Incarnations of God have been worshipped in all ages and in all countries. . . .

Let us therefore find God not only in Jesus of Nazareth but in all the great Ones that have preceded Him, in all that came after Him, and all that are yet to come. Our worship is unbounded and free. They are all manifestations of the same Infinite God. They are all pure and unselfish. They struggled, and gave up their lives for us, poor human beings. They each and all suffer vicarious atonement for every one of us, and also for all that are to come hereafter.

In a sense you are all prophets; every one of you is a prophet, bearing the burden of the world on your own shoulders. Have you ever seen a man, have you ever seen a woman, who is not quietly, patiently, bearing his or her little burden of life? The great prophets were giants—they bore a gigantic world on their shoulders. Compared with them we are pigmies, no doubt, yet we are doing the same task; in our little circles, in our little homes we are bearing our little crosses. There is no one so evil, no one so worthless, but he has to bear his own cross. But with all our mistakes, with all our evil thoughts and evil deeds, there is a bright spot somewhere, there is still somewhere the golden thread through which we are always in touch with the Divine. For, know for certain, that the moment the touch of the Divine is lost there would be annihilation. And because none can be annihilated, there is always somewhere in our heart of hearts, however low and degraded we may be, a little circle of light which is in constant touch with the Divine.

Our salutations go to all the past prophets, whose

teachings and lives we have inherited, whatever might have been their race, clime or creed! Our salutations go to all those God-like men and women, who are working to help humanity, whatever be their birth, color or race! Our salutations to those who are coming in the future,—living Gods, —to work unselfishly for our descendants!

EPISODES FROM THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

There came to Buddha, the Awakened One, five Brahmins who were discussing among themselves regarding the nature of God. The first said: "Blessed One, my book declares that God is so and so and we must come to Him in such a way." Another said, "No, that is wrong, for my book says this and this," and so each gave his own point of view. The Blessed One listened to all calmly and then asked each one in turn: "Do any of your books say that God is prone to anger, that He injures any creature, that He is impure?" "No," each answered, "they all teach that God is pure, is holy, is all-perfect." "Then, my friends," Buddha replied, "why do you not first become pure and good, then you will know what God is."

On another day the venerable Kashyapa sought out the Blessed One to destroy the doubt that had risen in his mind. "All things," he said, "are made of one essence, yet things are different according to the forms which they assume under different impressions." The Blessed One thus spoke to him:

"It is, Kashyapa, as if a potter made different vessels out of the same clay. Some of these pots are to contain sugar, others rice, others curds and milk; others still are vessels of impurity. There is no diversity in the clay used; the diversity of

the pots is only due to the moulding hands of the potter who shapes them for the various uses that circumstances may require. And as all things originate from one essence, so they are developing according to one law and they are destined to one aim which is Nirvana (perfection). Perfection, comes to you, Kashyapa, if you thoroughly understand, and if you live according to your understanding, that all things are of one essence and that there is but one law. Hence, there is but one perfection as there is but one Truth, not two or three. And the Tathagata (Incarnate One), is the same unto all beings, differing in his attitude only in so far as all beings are different. The Tathagata recreates the whole world like a cloud shedding its waters without distinction. He has the same sentiments for the high as for the low, for the wise as as for the ignorant, for the noble-minded as for the immoral. The Tathagata, O Kashyapa, knows the law whose essence is salvation, and whose end is the peace of Nirvana. He is the same to all, and yet knowing the requirements of every single being, he does not reveal himself to all alike. He does not impart to them at once the fulness of omniscience, but has regard to the disposition of various beings." . . .

Kutadanta, head of the village of Danamati, having heard of the Blessed One, approached Him with reverence and asked: "If thou art Buddha the Holy One, the Lord of the world, why dost not come like a king in all thy power and glory?"

"Thine eyes are holden," said the Blessed One. "If the eye of thy mind were undimmed, thou couldest see the glory and the power of Truth."

The Tathagata then expounded His teaching to Kutadanta and, as he listened, his spiritual sight was open and he cried out: "Accept me as thy dis-

ciple, O Blessed One! and let me partake of the bliss of immortality."

Then the Blessed One said: "Those only who do not believe, call me Gautama; but you call me Buddha, the Blessed One, and Teacher. And this is right, for I have even in this life entered Nirvana (state of enlightenment), while the life of Gautama has been extinguished. Self has disappeared and the Truth has taken its abode in me. This body of mine is Gautama's body and it will be dissolved in due time, and after its dissolution no one, neither God nor man, will see Gautama again. But the Truth remains. Buddha will not die; Buddha will continue to live in the holy body of the law. The extinction of the Blessed One will be by that passing away in which nothing remains that could tend to form another self. Nor will it be possible to point out the Blessed One as being here or there. But it will be like a flame in a great body of blazing fire. That flame has ceased; it has vanished and it cannot be said that it is here or there. In the body of the Dharma, however, the Blessed One can be pointed out; for the Dharma has been preached by the Blessed One.

"Ye are my children, I am your father; through me ye have been released from your sufferings. I myself, having reached the other shore, help others to cross the stream. I myself, having attained salvation, am a Savior to others; being comforted, I comfort others and lead them to the place of refuge. I shall fill with joy all the beings whose limbs languish; I shall give happiness to those who are dying from distress; I shall extend to them succor and deliverance. I was born into the world as the king of Truth for the salvation of the world. The subject on which I meditate is Truth. The practice to which I devote myself is Truth. My

words are all of Truth. My thoughts are always in the Truth. For lo! my self has become the Truth. I am the Truth. Whosoever comprehends the Truth, he will see the Blessed One, for the Truth has been preached by the Blessed One."

REPORTS

The new season's work at the Vedanta Centre of Boston has started under most encouraging conditions. The average attendance at all the meetings has increased as also the membership. During November Swami Paramananda conducted two Sunday Services and two weekly classes. He also gave a recent lecture before the Metaphysical Club of Boston on "The Ideal of a Universal Religion," and on December 16th he has been invited to speak before a large Men's Club in Quincy, Mass. His subject will be "India and Her Achievements."

The meetings at the Vedanta Centre will continue as heretofore. The subjects for the Sunday lectures will be: "Secret of Work," "Search after Truth," "The Power of Love," and "Divine Incarnation."

* * *

We have received the twelfth Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevasrama or Home of Service at Kankhal in the foot-hills of the Himalayas. To serve and nurse the sick without any distinction of caste or creed is the aim of the institution, and during the year under review 9344 persons received help. The patients treated were many of them from the most distant parts of India, as Kankhal is a sacred place of pilgrimage to which flock every year thousands of pilgrims from every quarter of the country. The work is under the able management of Swami Kalyanananda and it is gratifying to note that it received recently not

only warm praise from the Government but an official donation as well. It is carried on wholly by voluntary subscriptions, which, although generous, are seldom enough to permit the institution to meet all the demands made upon it.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

With this number "The Message of the East" completes its second volume. During the two years of its existence it has found a place on the tables of over one hundred of the leading libraries of this country, and many have been the words of appreciation and gratitude which have come from its individual readers and subscribers. This now encourages us to enlarge the scope of the publication in order that we may offer a greater variety of subject matter. During the coming year we hope to bring out a still unpublished lecture and notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda; as well as more of the invaluable manuscripts left us by the Swami Ramakrishnananda. Lectures and articles by other able Hindu teachers and further translations of the Upanishads will also appear. The special new features of this third volume will be sketches of the lives and teachings of the great Indian saints and philosophers; and translations from the most eminent modern writers of India, including selections from the dramas of the famous dramatist, G. C. Ghosh, who is called the Shakespeare of Bengal.

May we ask the co-operation of all friends and sympathizers in our work? Those who have already felt the value of "The Message of the East" can help it by securing new subscriptions and thereby extending its field of usefulness. Present subscribers are also requested to renew their subscriptions promptly.

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VOLUME III

1914

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. JANUARY, 1914 No. 1

As "The Message of the East" enters upon its third year, we wish to extend our hearty greetings to all its readers and sympathizers and to express our deep appreciation especially to those who have given it their encouragement and support. We pray earnestly to the Supreme Being that it may continue "to live for the good of many and for the happiness of many," ever carrying the message of Truth and Love with that spirit of tolerance which has always been the dominant note of all Eastern teaching, peculiarly that of India and her great Seers—a tolerance which means not compromise and mere forbearance, but breadth of vision, inclusiveness, the power to see unity in diversity. To proclaim this tolerance and to foster a loving understanding between East and West, is, as it has always been, the aim of this little magazine. With renewed hope, therefore, we now say to it:

"Resume thy march, with gentle feet that would not break the
Peaceful rest, even of the road side dust that lies so low. Yet strong and steady,
Blissful, bold and free. Awakener, ever Forward!
Speak thy stirring words."

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

When a man is on the plains he sees the lowly grass and the mighty pine tree and says, "How big is the tree and how small is the grass!" But when he ascends the mountain and looks from its high peak on the plain below, the mighty pine tree and the lowly grass blend into one indistinguishable mass of green verdure. So when the sight Divine is opened, all men appear as equal and one, and there remains no sense of distinction.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

God, who creates and inspires men, willed that they should be equal. He made them all capable of wisdom; He imposed the same laws upon all; and He has promised immortality to all. As He furnishes food for all, and gives the sweet repose of sleep to all, so does He give capacity for virtue to all. With Him no one is a slave and no one is a master. He is the Father of all, and we are all, by equal right, His children.

—*Lactantius* (Early Church Father).

My doctrine makes no distinction between high and low, rich and poor. It is like water which washes and purifies all alike. It is like the sky, for it has room for all.

—*Buddha.*

God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth.

—*St. Paul.*

When man shall have studied the nature of all things, and shall come to look upon himself as not confined within the walls of one city, or as a member of any particular community, but as a citizen of the universe considered as one Commonwealth, —amid such an acquaintance with Nature, and such a grand magnificence of things, to what a knowledge of himself will man attain!

—*Cicero.*

I call that mind free which sets no bounds to its love; which is not imprisoned in itself, or in a sect; which recognizes in all human beings the image of God and the rights of His children.

—*Channing.*

The good man loves all men. He loves to speak of the good of others. All within the four seas are his brothers. Love of man is the chief of all the virtues. . . The mean man sows, that himself or his friends may reap; but the love of the perfect man is universal.

—*Confucius.*

He whose heart is steadfastly engaged in Yoga (religious practice), looks everywhere with the eyes of equality, seeing the (Divine) Self in all beings and all beings in the Self. He who, being established in unity, worships Me dwelling in all beings, that Yogi, howsoever living, abides in Me.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE PROBLEM UNIVERSAL

Lecture by Swami Saradananda

(Delivered in Calcutta)

India is the land whence arose the first anthem of peace and harmony that travelled over the then known world. It was here that the first note of tolerance and of the unity and common brotherhood of all religions was sounded. It was here that arose that joyful song whose keynote was good-will to all and respect for every opinion which man holds sacred and dear, even today throughout the world; for the hallowed Rishis of India had no words of adverse criticism for any individual or system of thought which helped any one to build up his own self, but only soothing notes of peace and toleration and harmony and sympathy. It was in India that the three cardinal principles of religion: *Damyata, Datta, Dayadhvam*, (Control and regulate your appetites, Be charitable, Be tolerant and compassionate towards others), were held high as ideals of human life from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin, from the East coast to the West. And it is my belief, in which perhaps you all share, that it is from India again that the first note of universal tolerance will go out over the civilized world, teaching men once more that Universal Brotherhood and Unity which lie beneath all the different forms of religion and philosophy and which the world has forgotten so hopelessly at the present day.

From whatever standpoint it is considered, you

will find the problem which we have met to discuss is of great importance and vital interest. It arose in the mind of the first-born man in the far beyond where history is dumb and mythology sheds none of her uncertain rays, in these four words: "Whence, How, What and Why?" and we can very rightly put the same question in the same four words even today in all the present-day light of reason and science and advancement. The universe stands a constant challenge to the human understanding, and the heart of man has been asking in all times an interpretation of his surroundings, called in one word "Nature." Our science, politics and religion, our sociology, ethics and philosophy, our beliefs about sin and atonement, right and wrong, God-vision and realization of the highest end—all these things which have helped to chasten, purify, ennoble and uplift humanity and are so dear to all our hearts, all these are the outcome of this and this alone. Man finds himself in this vast world surrounded by this infinite environment. He finds himself always acted upon by forces that are lying outside and the action and reaction between these outside forces, the physical or the natural, and those that are to be found within the consciousness of man, is the producer of all knowledge and civilization.

All complexities of thought and action, the result of the accumulations of ages and of varying conditions, have their root in this one problem of all times. Man asked himself repeatedly, What is this

universe? Whence is it? How has it come? What is its end? Questions like these came pouring into his mind and perplexed and bewildered, or ennobled and enriched his life in the long run. Ignore them however he might, he could never rid himself of them. Aye, none can give these questions up even at the present day. All men are bound to enquire, explain and act according to the interpretation they put upon them. That has been the law since the beginning of creation and that will be the law in all time to come.

From the interpretation of this one problem—What is this universe?—will come out as necessary conclusions all the different beliefs regarding God, the soul, the life beyond, and everything which we find in the religions, bibles and philosophies of the world. If we could examine the history of the different interpretations given in different ages through the crude and simple language of mythology, or through the well-balanced, precise, yet expressive language of philosophy and science, it would be a very interesting study. But for our present purpose I shall try to put before you the solution of the great Indian sages of old and compare it with the conclusions which the modern world of thought have come to, and see how far the old conclusions agree with the new ones.

All the answers given as explanations of the objective world can be divided into two principal classes. One holds that atoms are the ultimate cause of this universe; molecules are formed by a

force called molecular attraction inherent in the atoms, and out of their aggregate has come all these wonderful varied objects which we see before us. Now if we are to admit this theory, then the atoms of the materialists must have possessed in the germ state, amongst others, the qualities of consciousness and intelligence which, gradually developed and highly refined, appeared at last as human consciousness and intelligence; and not only that, but they must have had the power of organization and the will to evolve into all these things. To scientists who believe that such intelligent matter is the ultimate cause of this universe we have nothing to say. For they speak in different words only of the same principles which men have been calling God or an ever-guiding Intelligence; and therefore this atomic theory virtually coincides with the theory that God is the cause of this universe.

There is another group of thinkers holding a different opinion,—that everything is the outcome of mental vibration. All that I know, all these objects around me are nothing but my own mental images. The sensations and perceptions are all in my own mind and I conclude wrongly that the outside objects and the world are producing them in me. This has been called Idealism. Now here, too, we find on examination that, to show that the mind is the cause of this universe, we shall have to prove that the mind is independent of outside impressions and that it can create all and any of the images at will. But is this true? Can we bring

out any new combination, anything that we desire, out of our own minds? Certainly not. And so we find that this theory also must have a defect in some part or other. Then there is another thing. Can or do we ever know matter as separate from or independent of the mind and mental forces? Certainly not. No scientist has been able to analyse and separate matter and force. The combination of the two is there even in the smallest particle which he calls atom; and the scientist's mind has been there to give an interpretation. On the other hand, there are many who agree in thinking that atoms are nothing but so many centres of force. The actions of what we call force or energy are what give them their appearance and individuality as atoms.

Hindu philosophy considers mind as a subtle material force, but not the spirit. The mind works through the medium of the brain, and is in its own turn an instrument in the hand of the soul. The process of life and thought does not die with the death of the body, but it passes on with the soul; and when the soul takes another body, it goes on working and gathering experience again through the medium of that body. A beautiful expression of this principle comes in the fifteenth Chapter of the Bhagavad-Gita:—"Whatever body is entered into, or whatever body is departed from, the Lord takes them (the mind and the senses, etc.,) along with him like the wind (carrying) the scents off from their seats (flowers, etc.)". And the conclu-

sion of the Hindu philosophy has always been that the mind can be enlarged, developed and expanded to an infinite extent. We can see the soul only through itself in the state of superconscious existence; once there, all fetters drop off, all limitations vanish forever; the activities of the finite and the limited stop and the infinite shines out in its everlasting power and glory.

We find both these theories of materialism and idealism—the attempts to explain the origin of the universe from matter or from mind alone, however good they may be in other respects, are inconclusive and unsatisfactory to human reason; hence they are both defective. Aye, the Hindu Seers differ considerably in their opinion about this. What is their conclusion then, about the subject and the object, mind and matter, the knower and the known? They say that all these are manifestations of one Eternal Unit,—the witness that is behind. They have come out of One Substance, which is the *Akhanda Satchidananda*—the indivisible and hence unlimited essence of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Mistake them not when they say that it is *the* indivisible principle of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. Knowledge and existence and love, as we know them, are all finite. And why have they been qualified by the old Rishis with the words indivisible, infinite or unbounded? Because human language is too imperfect to express that Eternal Witness that is behind the inner and outer manifestations. Speech and mind can never reach

There, because they are the effects of It. "Whence speech falls back baffled, with the mind"—such is the nature of the Unit behind and thus has it been extolled by the voice of the Vedas and Upanishads. The One Eternal Substance is always behind, and That has brought to light the subject and the object. Hence it can never be known by the mind. Herbert Spencer's "Unknowable" thus approaches very near to the "Substance" of the Hindu Rishis. The great difference, however, lies in this: that the Hindu Rishis hold that it is quite possible for man to attain to It and realize fully his oneness with It; and the attainment of that stage has been called by them the stage of *Nirvikalpa Samadhi*,—the state of Super-conscious Existence. In this there are no more wanderings of the mind after things that wither and perish, but it remains calm and satisfied in the realization of the nature and glory of the Soul. The old Seers of the Vedas never treated the different stages of consciousness as separate things. They came to know by introspection, of which the different methods are to be found in the different philosophical systems, that the three stages of consciousness supplement, but never contradict one another. The sub-conscious existence that we find in the lower animals and in still lower organisms, the consciousness as it exists in man and in beings higher than man, and then the highest stage of consciousness, the super-conscious existence—all these have never been looked upon as the functions of three different

minds, but as different conditions or stages of One Mind. Self-consciousness is a step in advance of the subconscious stage towards development and progress, and reaches its perfection in the superconscious existence. Indeed there is no difference between them except in degree.

We have seen that the universe can never be the result of atoms or material particles. We have seen also that the universe cannot be the outcome of mind alone. The Hindu Sages beautifully express this view in a sublime verse in the Katha-Upanishad ;—"The universe is like an everlasting fig tree having its roots high up in the bosom of the Infinite and its branches here below." To find the root of this universe you will have to go beyond time, space and causation; because the roots are fixed there in the bosom of the Infinite. Then the verse goes on to say: "That is Pure, that is Brahman, that is Immortal." Therefore the first thing that we find regarding the universe is that it has been projected out of that Absolute Existence which forms the background of it. Then again there is another thing. They have looked upon this universe as one homogeneous whole. Outside we have this ocean of matter connecting everything that is material. Our bodies are like so many whirlpools in the ocean of matter and are always linked with the sun and the moon and other beings (if there are any) in the other planets. Behind this ocean of matter what do we find? The ocean of mind. Your mind and my mind and the mind

of everyone here or elsewhere exist in that mental ocean and are thus joined together. They are like so many centres of force in the one vast ocean of mind, and beyond that there lies the Infinite, the Absolute—that which can never be described by any word, nor be reached by the limited mind. It transcends all limits, but the reflection of that One Soul falls upon all these different centres of force in the mental ocean. We have seen how millions of reflections, produced by one sun in the millions of waves in the ocean, appear as so many different suns. Even where the water is muddy, there is the reflection, only we do not see it. And so the reflection of that One Soul is shining within you and me and within everyone. The reflection within you forms your individuality, your little ego, and so on with all the rest. But in reality there is but One Soul pervading everything; and if we can transcend the limits of the mind and the body, we shall reach the Real Truth. But the Vedanta philosophy never says that all these reflections are false. The Rishis did not say that the reflections do not exist or that the relative world, because it is a phenomenon, is an illusion. It exists, but relatively. As long as there will be relativity, there will be this world; but outside of this relativity there will be found One Infinite Ocean of Knowledge and Love reigning supreme, there will be found the One without a second. The knower and the known, the subject and the object and all these varied differentiations come under the same

category of relativity and have been projected out of One Principle of Existence. This, therefore, is the interpretation of the universe: that it is the outcome of something which is not relative but absolute in its essence. The scientists of the present age have also come to the same conclusion: that all these phenomena can never exist unless they are based on some permanent principle—a groundwork upon which all these colors have been drawn. Materialism says there is nothing but matter. Idealism says there is nothing but mind. But the Vedanta says: No, mind and matter are manifestations of one Permanent Substance; they are the outcome of One Permanent Essence which can be best described as the Infinite Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss. "Verily, out of Bliss has this universe evolved, it lives in Bliss and in Bliss does it go back and is absorbed. Know Brahman to be Bliss."

ANCIENT HINDU STORY

In ancient times there was a sage well-versed in all the Scriptures. Yet though he studied by night and by day, he found no satisfaction for the craving of his mind. He longed to know the whole of God, but always that knowledge evaded him. At last he threw aside his Books, retired to a lonely spot in the jungle close by the sea and built for himself a hermitage of bamboo poles and dried palm leaves. All around there was silence and peace. Nothing came to disturb him in his long hours of searching and meditation. Days and

months passed, but still he seemed to know as little as ever of the Supreme. Year after year rolled by, and his ignorance continued. Youth faded and his head grew gray, still the problem remained unsolved.

One day he was walking on the beach bent and dejected, questioning within himself whether he should give up his search, when he suddenly caught sight of a little boy busily engaged at the edge of the water. Thinking that a certain fisherman's son had been left there while the father had gone to the open sea to catch fish, he drew near to speak to the child. The little boy, however, was so absorbed in taking up the water in his small hands and throwing it on the sands that he did not hear the sage approach. Several times the old man called, but still the child went on dipping out the water. Nothing could turn him from his task. At last, however, the importunate sage gained his attention, but all the boy would say was:

"Excuse me, sir, I have no time to talk with you. Do you not see that I have to throw out all the water of this ocean and dry it up?"

"Are you mad?" the sage exclaimed. "You little creature! You think you can empty the whole of this vast ocean?"

"Why not, sir?" answered the sweet laughing child. "Is it any more impossible for me to dry up this finite ocean with these little hands of mine, than for you to unravel the infinite depths of God by that limited mind of yours?"

KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

(The Katha-Upanishad is probably the most widely known of all the Upanishads. It was early translated into Persian and through this rendering first made its way into Europe. Later Raja Ram Mohun Roy brought out an English version. It has since appeared in various languages; and English, German and French writers are all agreed in pronouncing it one of the most perfect expressions of the religion and philosophy of the Vedas. Sir Edwin Arnold popularized it by his metrical rendering under the name of "The Secret of Death" and Ralph Waldo Emerson gives its story in brief at the close of his essay on "Immortality.")

PEACE CHANT

May He (the Supreme Being) protect us both. May He be pleased with us. May we acquire strength. May our study bring us illumination. May there be no discord among us.

Om! Peace! Peace! Peace!

The Peace Verse was always chanted by both teacher and taught before beginning their study in order to tune the minds one to the other and bring all hearts in accord. Also it helped them to focus their energies, to bring their thoughts to one point, that they might gain direct perception and not merely the knowledge which comes from the study of books.

PART I

I

Vajasrava, being desirous of heavenly rewards, made a gift of all that he possessed. He had a son by the name of Nachiketas.

II

When the offerings were being distributed (Nachiketas) although young, being possessed with faith (Shraddha), thought:

III

"These cows have drunk water, eaten grass and given milk for the last time, and their senses have lost all vigor. He who gives these (such gifts) undoubtedly goes to joyless realms."

In India the ideal of charity has always been to give freely, for the joy of giving, without asking anything in return; and the whole purpose and merit of the charity is lost, if the giver entertains the least thought of name, fame or individual benefit. The special sacrifice (Viswajit) which Vajasrava was making, required of him to give away all that he possessed. When the gifts were brought forward to be offered, however, his son Nachiketas, although very young (probably a lad about 12 years of age), began to discriminate within himself regarding their nature. His heart became filled with *Shraddha*. There is no one English word which can convey the meaning of *Shraddha*. It is more than mere faith. It also implies self-reliance, an independent sense of right and wrong, and the courage of one's own conviction. As a boy of tender age he had no right to question his father's action and yet, impelled by the awakening of his higher nature, he could not but reflect within himself: "Surely by merely giving these cows which have lost all their usefulness, my father cannot

gain any worthy end. That alone can be a true sacrifice when the best is offered." Therefore anxious for his father's welfare, yet not wishing to find fault directly with his action, he approached him gently and reverently.

IV

He said to his father: "Dear father, to whom wilt thou give me?" He said it a second time, then a third time. The father replied: "I shall give thee unto Death."

Nachiketas, being a dutiful son and eager to atone for his father's inadequate sacrifice, tried to remind him thus indirectly that he had not fulfilled his promise to give away all his possessions, since he had not yet offered his own son, who would be a worthier gift than useless cattle. His father, conscious that he was not making a true sacrifice, tried to ignore the boy's question; but irritated by his persistence, he at last impatiently made answer: "I give thee to Yama, the Lord of Death." The fact that anger could so quickly rise in his heart proved that he had not the proper attitude of a sacrificer, who must always be tranquil, uplifted and free from egoism.

V

(Nachiketas thought): "Among many (of my father's pupils) I stand first; among many (others) I stand in the middle, (but never last). What is there to do for (my father) with Yama (Ruler of Death), which can be done by me today?"

It was not arrogance which led Nachiketas to thus consider his own standing and importance. He was weighing his value as a son and pupil in order to be able to judge whether or not he had merit enough to deserve his father's love. Seeing that he had not failed in his duty in any way, he was able to understand that his father's harsh reply was only the expression of a momentary outburst of anger. Yet he believed that his command must not be disobeyed. So he said to his father, who was overwhelmed with grief at his own hasty words:

VI

"Look back to those who lived before (ancestors) and look to those who live now. Like grain the mortal decays and again springs up (is reborn)."

Absolute truthfulness is necessary for the attainment of the Highest. Whatever is said must be done. Nachiketas, realizing this and not wishing his father to fall back or swerve from Truth, sought to strengthen his resolution by reminding him of his ancestors who never sacrificed Truth for worldly gain or for mortal pleasure. All things perish, Truth alone remains. It is the only sure basis of life. Thus Nachiketas convinced his father that he should remain true to his word and send him to Yama, the Ruler of Death. Then Nachiketas went to the abode of Death, but Yama was absent and the boy waited without food or

drink for three days. On Yama's return one of his attendants said to him:

VII

Like fire a Brahmin guest enters into houses, (a good host) quenches that fire by an offering. (Therefore) O Vaivaswata, bring water.

VIII

The foolish man in whose house a Brahmin guest remains without food, all his hopes, expectations, company of holy men, all his good words and deeds, his sons and cattle are destroyed.

According to the ancient Vedic Ideal a guest was the representative of God and should be received with due reverence and honor. Especially was this the case with a Brahmin or a Sanyasin whose life is wholly consecrated to God. Anyone who fails to give proper care to a holy guest brings misfortune on himself and his household. When Yama returned, therefore, the attendants anxiously informed him of Nachiketas' presence and begged him to bring water to wash his feet, this being always the first service to an arriving guest.

IX

(Yama said): O Brahmana! Reverend guest! As thou hast remained three nights in my house without food, my salutations to thee, O Brahmana, and may all be well with me. Therefore (in return) ask three boons.

(This offer of three boons was one for each of the nights Nachiketas had waited in the abode of Yama without food or drink.)

X

Nachiketas said: May Gautama, my father, be free from anxious thought (about me). May he lose all anger and be pacified in heart. May he recognize me and welcome me when I am sent back by thee. This, O Death, is the first of the three boons I choose.

XI

Yama replied: Through my will Auddalaki Aruni (thy father) will recognize thee, (and be loving toward thee) as before. He will sleep in peace at night. He will be free from wrath when he sees thee released from the mouth of death.

XII

Nachiketas said: In the realm of heaven there is no fear, thou (Death) art not there; nor is there fear of old age. Having crossed beyond both hunger and thirst and being above grief, (they) rejoice in heaven.

XIII

Thou knowest, O Death, the fire-sacrifice that leads to heaven. Tell this to me, who am full of Shraddha (faith and sincere eagerness). They who live in the realm of heaven enjoy freedom from death. This I beg as my second boon.

XIV

Yama replied: I know well that fire which leads to the realm of heaven. I shall tell it to thee. Listen to me. Know, O Nachiketas, that this is the means of attaining heavenly realms and their support. It is seated in the heart of all beings.

Fire is regarded as "the foundation of all the worlds," as stated in the next verse, because it is the revealer of creation. If there were no fire or light, no manifested form would be visible. We read in the Semitic Scriptures, "In the beginning the Lord said, 'Let there be light.'" This fire, which stands in the external universe as one of the purest symbols of the Divine, also dwells in subtle form in the heart of every living being as the vital energy, the life-force or cause of existence.

XV

Yama then told him that Fire-sacrifice, the foundation of all the worlds. What bricks, how many and how laid for the altar. Nachiketas repeated all as it was explained to him. Then Death, being pleased with him, again said:

XVI

The Great-souled one (Yama) being pleased, said to him (Nachiketas): "I give thee now another boon. This fire (sacrifice) shall be named after thee. Take also this garland of many colors."

XVII

He who performs this Nachiketa fire-sacrifice three times, being united with the three (mother, father and teacher) and who fulfils the threefold duty (study of the Vedas, sacrifice and alms-giving) crosses over birth and death. Knowing this worshipful, shining fire, born of Brahman, and realizing Him, he attains eternal peace.

XVIII

He who knows the three-fold Nachiketa fire and performs the Nachiketa fire-sacrifice with three-fold knowledge, having cast off the fetters of death and being beyond grief, he rejoices in the realms of heaven.

XIX

O Nachiketas, this is thy fire, that leads to heaven, which thou hast chosen as thy second boon. People will call this fire after thy name. Ask the third boon, Nachiketas.

The Vedas are divided into two parts: one the *Jnana-Kanda* or the wisdom-portion, dealing with pure knowledge of God and the higher Self; the other the *Karma-Kanda*, which is entirely devoted to ceremonials, by which health, wealth, cattle, sons, long life, the fulfilment of worldly desires, can be gained. The wise Rishis or Seers of Truth, whose words are recorded in the Vedas, did not deny such gratifications to mankind. They recognized that it was useless to ask ordinary human beings to give up earthly pleasures, because it would not be possible for them, so they told them how they could acquire these through proper performance of certain sacrifices and rituals. Although those Sages had themselves renounced all earthly possessions, they knew that the majority of mankind could not follow the path of the Absolute or Unconditioned. They knew that the day would come when through their own experience every

human being would outgrow his lower desires and seek for higher things. In the meanwhile, they said, let him enjoy, let him want long life, health, wealth; and the *Karma-kanda,* or ceremonial portion of the Vedas, was to tell him how these could be attained.

The preceding verses deal with the *Karma-Kanda.* Yama tells Nachiketas how, by performing sacrifice with the three-fold knowledge, he may transcend grief and death and reach heaven. The three-fold knowledge referred to, is: (1) how to prepare the altar; (2) how to conduct the service (there must be perfect harmony with father, mother and teacher, proper study of the Scriptures and almsgiving); and last the sacrificer must have the knowledge of the Self as manifest in the shining form of fire. Nachiketas being eager to learn, listened with whole-hearted attention and was able to repeat all that was told him. This so pleased Yama that he granted him the extra boon of naming the fire-sacrifice after him and gave him a garland set with precious stones.

Verses 16-18 are regarded by many as an interpolation, which would account for certain obscurities and repetitions in them.

(To be continued)

REPORTS

On Dec. 16th Swami Paramananda delivered a lecture on "India and Her Achievements" before the First Parish Club of Quincy, Mass. The lec-

ture was preceded by a dinner at which 180 of the Club members were present. Others joined the gathering at the hour of the lecture, making up the largest attendance of this season. The Rev. A. L. Hudson, who presided, showed remarkable breadth in his short but eloquent introductory address. He reminded his listeners that when the West was still in barbarism, India was highly civilized. Indian civilization, he continued, seemed remote from that of the West, because it was essentially spiritual, while Western civilization was daily growing more material. To check this on-sweeping wave of materialism and maintain a state of equilibrium we could learn much from the East. Indeed, he had fully realized after talking with the Swami, how untrue was Kipling's oft-repeated couplet: "East is East and West is West and never the twain can meet." On the contrary for twenty-five years Indian thought had been spreading through the West in the form of Christian Science, New Thought, Theosophy, etc. but he believed it was better to go directly to the source. In closing he alluded to the fact that the Swami had recently translated from the Sanskrit the "Bhagavad-Gita, one of the greatest classics of the world."

The Swami then began his lecture, in the course of which he passed in review all of India's glorious past—her religion and philosophy, her language and her great architectural monuments, showing some lantern slides to add vividness to his words. The audience listened with the closest attention for an hour and a half and kept the speaker on the platform for some time longer answering questions.

REPORTS (*Continued*)

The Christmastide was observed, according to the usual custom, at all the Vedanta Centres of America. In San Francisco three Services were held on Christmas day, at which lectures were delivered, by Swami Trigunatita and Swami Prakashananda on "The Nativity and Christ," "Christ as a Messenger of Light," and "What is True Worship of Jesus?" In New York there was also a Service; and at The Vedanta Centre of Boston the day was celebrated by a special Service at eight in the evening, to which all the friends of the work were invited. Swami Paramananda delivered an address on the salient points of Christ's Teaching, and the true spirit of Christmas. At the close of the meeting the blessed fruits and flowers from the altar were distributed.

The other meetings at the Boston Centre throughout the month remained the same as usual. In January Swami Paramananda hopes to begin a course of Sunday afternoon lectures in a public hall, and will probably continue them through February and March. But the regular Sunday morning Service and the classes on Tuesday and Thursday evening at 8 o'clock will remain as heretofore.

We beg to acknowledge with thanks the kind offerings received for the flood sufferers in India.

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The Message of the East

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.

"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. FEBRUARY, 1914 No. 2

The Indian doctrine of Karma is not fatalism as so often erroneously represented. On the contrary, it declares man to be the creator of his own destiny. All that predetermines his condition and environment is his own previous mode of life and thought. Each of his actions brings a reaction of like nature and duration as truly as in chemistry or physics, and it rests wholly with him to determine the character of the reaction by the choice he exercises in his action. Absolute free will is impossible on this plane of relativity. Freedom for man consists here in a knowledge and conscious application of the law. He can rise above that law only by transcending the sphere where it operates. Karma viewed merely as a chain of effects appears like fatalism, just as the universe looked upon only from the outside seems the plaything of a cruel, relentless Deity. But when one passes into the invisible causal realm, then the chaos transforms itself into a cosmos, the wonder of law and order is everywhere, and the Soul's existence is seen as a logical unbroken sequence of causes and effects, in which man's own word or thought or deed is the cause, which, operating in accordance with the law,

brings him a certain condition or experience as a natural and inevitable consequence. Let him once understand this law and he will no longer cry out against the fate which is of his own making; but he will direct the full force of his will towards setting in motion a new set of causes which will bring him more desirable results. Thus he becomes the master and builder of his own life, building as he chooses in time or in eternity.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE.

Thou canst not gather what thou dost not sow; as thou dost plant the tree, so will it grow. . . Whatever the act a man commits, whate'er his state of mind, of that the recompense must he receive in corresponding body. —*Laws of Manu.*

Indian philosophy contains no outcry against divine injustice, and in no way encourages suicidal expedients. They would, in fact, be of no avail, because according to Indian views, the same troubles and the same problems would have to be faced again and again in another life. Considering that the aim of all Indian philosophy was the removal of suffering, which was caused by nescience, and the attainment of the highest happiness which was produced by knowledge, we should have more right to call it endæmonistic than pessimistic.

—*Max Muller.*

One needs only to understand the full meaning of the metaphysico-physiological axiom, that in

reality nothing can be created or annihilated, to recognize that the soul must have existed prior to its becoming visible in a physical body. —*Fichte.*

As man casts off worn-out garments and puts on others which are new, similarly the embodied soul, casting off worn-out bodies, enters into others which are new. These bodies are perishable; but the dwellers in these bodies are eternal, indestructible and impenetrable.

—*Sri Krishna* (*Bhagavad-Gita*).

LAW OF KARMA AND REINCARNATION

Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Life does not begin suddenly. Life does not spring from nothing. Science at least proves so much,—that something cannot come out of nothing. A tree cannot come into existence without the seed; and unless we know the seed, we cannot fully know the tree. What we perceive in this manifested universe is already latent in the unmanifested; and without a knowledge of the unmanifested we cannot find a satisfactory explanation of the manifold forms of life. There are certain happenings which we cannot explain because we are ignorant of the cause. We judge from the outer alone, from the surface, hence things seem to us mysterious or unjust, but when our sight is open and we can penetrate the depth, then we discover the cause and everything becomes clear to us. So it is with the great inequality which we see in

the universe. Why are some born prosperous, happy, talented, and others not? We are all human beings; we have all come into existence more or less in the same way. What makes these differences? There are some who try to explain them by saying that God Almighty creates them. True; in one sense nothing happens without God's will; but there must be some reason. If the Almighty creates suffering for one and blesses another, He must have some reason for it. The Ancient Sages of India did not try to throw the blame on the Infinite, on Invisible Providence; they found the cause in each human being. A man who is suffering has done something to bring it on himself, because what we sow, that we reap; this is the Law. So the doctrine of Reincarnation, which may seem a strange doctrine to many, is neither contrary to nature nor to reason. It is in strict accordance with the Law; it explains the course of evolution and accounts for all the great diversity which exists.

There are many who believe in a future existence, but they are not ready to accept rebirth or pre-existence. But we cannot believe in one without believing in the other. We cannot believe in a future life without believing in a previous existence, because this life will be pre-existent to our future life. This is logic; and it must appeal to our common sense. Nor is this idea absolutely alien to the teaching of Christ. Do we not find traces here and there in the history of the people of that time which show that they also believed in

pre-existence? In the Bible we read: "And they asked him (John the Baptist): Art thou Elias? And he said I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered. No." In another place Christ speaks thus to His disciples: "Whom say the people that I am? They answering said: John the Baptist; but some say Elias, and others say that one of the old prophets is risen again." How shall we explain this if a belief in pre-existence was not prevalent among the people? Do we not see here clearly the idea of Reincarnation? They could not talk in this way about a thing which was not generally accepted. The prophet Elias had existed and they evidently expected him to come back. As Christ Himself declares later: "But I say unto you that Elias is come already and they knew him not. . . . . Then the disciples understood that He spake unto them of John the Baptist." So Reincarnation could not have been altogether a strange doctrine in Palestine.

If we study the Scriptures intelligently and without bias, we find everywhere shown the connection between this life and the previous one, and the connection of both of these with the future life. How can we deal with just this span of life, with only this one point, without taking into consideration the two ends which make life complete? If we do not take account of the past and the future, we cannot explain the present. Without these, the Soul would be just as mortal as anything in the phenomenal universe; it would be like the grass

springing up and withering. There would be no reason in our trying to live our lives nobly, in trying to do good. But the law teaches us that man reaps whatever he sows. Therefore our birth here in this life shows what we have acquired. According to that, we have found body, mind, intelligence, surroundings, everything in just proportion. Our character and our conditions contain all that we have earned,—evil and good, bitter and sweet. We go through varied experiences, but not in one life only. What is this life? Life does not begin and end with this one span. It is eternal. It is everlasting. Do you suppose one who is born here and suddenly dies has lost everything? No. Life is not ended for that individual. With the new experience he has gained, he will continue his onward journey until he attains the completion, the fulfillment of life. Evolution is constantly going on in each soul. Every one must grow; every one must unfold. What each one has in germ-form must evolve until he reaches the highest; because we are all potentially Divine. Divinity is our birthright. We all have that mightiness, that soul-consciousness within us, that which is part of God; but now we do not know it. Until we become fully conscious of it, however, we are not liberated; we still remain under the sway of ignorance. The journey towards this consciousness is called the process of evolution. Suppose we strive in this life with all earnestness to accomplish an Ideal, and before we have accomplished it, we are taken away? Do you

imagine that all our effort is in vain? No; what we have gained is ours.

This is the only explanation of the great diversity and inequality which we find. When we know the Law, we do not have to blame any one for existing conditions. It is the Law which explains everything and it is the knowledge of the Law which gives us the power of endurance. A man who does not see the past, who does not see the future, if suffering overtakes him, his impulse is to put an end to this life. But escape from suffering cannot come by merely going out of the body, by destroying this physical instrument; if that were true, there are many who would be liberated. But this is not the case. You may break the physical instrument, but the mind, the intelligence and ego remain, that which is called the subtle body; and this continues after death. It is this subtle body which contains the individual character; all that the individual has earned through his striving, all the intelligence he possesses, all the good or evil which he has done are stored up in that. No one can rob him of what he has earned; no one can give him anything more.

This is the Law of Karma or the law of cause and effect as applied to human life and activity. It is not, however, anything arbitrary. It does not mean that, when we have done something wrong, there is no hope for us, that we cannot counterbalance our mistake. We have put a weight of wrong-doing on one scale, which leads to misery;

but when we put a weight of right-doing on the other scale, it must counterbalance. So we are given this consolation: what we make, we can unmake. It is not that we have simply to fold our hands and wait for things to be worked out, saying "What can I do? I am born like this." True, you may have been born with certain limitations, but they are only the outcome of your own past thoughts and actions, which you can counteract by your present life. In the East we find wonderful endurance and patience even among the poorest. What gives them that endurance? It is the understanding of this Law. Even a peasant knows that it is no use blaming others, no use cursing his own fate. He recognizes that if misfortune has fallen upon him, it is because he has done something which makes him deserve it; but he also recognizes that it is not lasting. Pleasure and pain come and go just as clouds gather, then pass and the sun shines again. We too often forget this and take conditions too seriously. All our feelings, all our experiences of joy and sorrow, when they come, we think that they are going to be enduring. But the effect can never be more lasting than the cause; and since our mistakes are finite, so must be the suffering created by them. For this reason the doctrine of eternal reward and punishment has never found a place in the teaching of Vedanta, because it is irrational, illogical and contrary to the law.

You may say: "If we have existed before, how is

it that we do not remember?" In the Bhagavad-Gita Arjuna asks a similar question, and the Lord replies: "Both you and I have gone through many births. You know them not because of your ignorance, but I know them all. It is not that we have come into existence today. We have all been before and we shall be in future." The fact that you do not remember your past existence does not disprove anything, because the memory is very unreliable. We find people who remember certain things which happened years ago, and there are others who do not even recall what happened yesterday; so we cannot refute this doctrine on that ground. There are many things that occurred in our childhood which we cannot recollect; but from that must we conclude that we did not exist in our childhood, that our life began from where we began to remember? That would be absurd. Similarly, it cannot be a very sound argument to doubt our past existence because we do not remember it. There are people who not only remember every thing which has happened in this life, but who also get hold of the thread which connects this with their previous life. Their eyes have developed a greater power of vision, their ears are able to hear more, their intellect has been clarified, they can penetrate the unseen realm and they do not doubt regarding their past or future. They know and their knowledge is based on actual perception.

There are still other problems for which Reincarnation seems to offer the only solution. We see

here and there one who is born with remarkable genius, with a brilliant mind, with wonderful talent for music or art or science. Even in childhood he manifests these gifts; where does he acquire them? We know that all knowledge is based on experience; no knowledge can come by chance; whatever we possess we have acquired. If you say, "I have not done anything to gain it in this life," then you must have earned it sometime in the past; because all that we have now is wholly the result of our own effort somewhere. Even if something is given us, we cannot retain it unless we have developed the capacity, unless we deserve it. So the child who possesses any unusual power within him, must have earned it through his own striving; and he is now reaping in the form of genius, as a scientist or an artist, the fruits of earnest labor in past lives. It shows that he has already lived and worked and gathered experience along these same lines and that here he is merely taking up the thread where he dropped it; or, in other words, that this life is nothing but the continuation of a previous existence.

We must not look upon our life as confined within the limits of this earthly existence. We must not think that we have only this one life-time to acquire all that we desire. It is this which makes us impatient and weak. This is also the reason why people are often selfish, why they try to rob others; it is because they think they are losing their one opportunity. But the knower of the Law, who

believes in the eternity of the soul, is patient and serene. He can wait. He works calmly for whatever he desires, knowing that if he does not get it here and now, he will have another opportunity; because his life is unending. The soul which is immortal, which has been and will be, is manifesting not only in this life, but is connected at either end with a previous life and a future life. Unless we take account of that which has been already, we cannot understand the present, much less can we explain the future. They are all joined with one another. Thus the doctrine of Reincarnation makes clear to us the law of cause and effect and teaches us to live and work hopefully and patiently.

As we go through the process of evolution, we pass from one life to another. We go onward and forward, and as we advance, we find the conditions and environment which are especially suitable for the unfoldment of our character. Just as when we are climbing a mountain, we occasionally go down, then up, but always we are coming nearer the top; so in this life we see here and there a person who from the social standpoint may seem to have fallen, yet we should not judge, for perhaps this special lesson is necessary to his growth and next time he will come nearer the Goal. As we pass through this succession of lives, what determines our condition and environment? The Lord says in the Bhagavad-Gita: "Whatever state (or being) One dwells upon in the end, at the time of leaving the body, that alone he attains, because of his constant

thought of that state or being." This idea that we are born in accordance with our last thought means that whatever thoughts have been dominant in our heart, whatever has been the greatest and most obvious form of activity in our life, this will rise at the moment of departing. It is impossible for us to think of something new when giving up the body. In the agony of death, there is great suffering, especially for those who lack in spiritual knowledge, because everyone naturally clings to life. Who wants to abandon life? As long as there is unsatisfied desire in our heart, we hold to this existence for the fulfillment of that desire; and there is inevitable pain when we are being forcibly separated from it. In such a moment we cannot think of anything strange or new. All the thoughts which have governed our life naturally rise. So the Lord says again: "Therefore at all times think of Me and perform thy duties. Having offered thy mind and intellect to Me, thou shalt without doubt come unto Me."

This is the aim and object of human life,—not to lose sight of Truth, because without Truth we are weak. All that seems so mysterious,—previous life, future life—no longer remains a mystery after we come in direct contact with God. It is because we live apart from Him that we feel so absolutely helpless; it is this which makes it so difficult for us to explain everything; but the moment we touch the Source, all things regarding life and death become clear to us. Life in any form, even in the

greatest misery, is not a curse. A knower of the law feels that life in itself is a blessing and he works with faith and perseverance, realizing that even if he does not accomplish his end in this birth, in the next he may reach the heights. This is the consolation which Reincarnation offers,—that even if we fail in one life, all is not lost; but we can start afresh and go higher and higher until we reach the Goal. All that we have gained before helps us, and gives us the courage to go on with new strength and hope. Reincarnation is not an inevitable thing. It is we who cause our own rebirth. As long as there is imperfection in us, as long as there is unfulfilled desire, that means we have not completeness of life; we crave something which we do not possess. The effort to satisfy this craving carries us from birth to birth; but as we grow in understanding, we learn that true satisfaction is not to be found in external things, but that the Kingdom of Heaven is within; that in our own inner being alone can we find fullness of life. Then all the desires which have bound us drop off and the soul becomes free from birth and re-birth. This is called *Mukti* or liberation. Having attained this, a man is no longer bound by the fetters of Karma (cause and effect) and need not incarnate again. If he comes, it is for others. There are perfect souls who return voluntarily to uplift their fellowmen, to give them knowledge, to lead them towards freedom.

Such is the doctrine of Reincarnation. It means

that we go through a gradual evolution, passing from birth to birth, advancing step by step until we reach the highest, where we see that we are free, that we are one with God. Then we transcend death and realize eternal life.

REBIRTH AND IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

It was in India and among the Aryas that the doctrine of the pre-existence, the immortality and the individuality of the soul first arose. Recent researches in Egypt have failed to show any traces of the doctrines of an independent and individual soul existing before and after the earthly phase of existence. Some of the mysteries were no doubt in possession of this idea, but in those it has been traced to India. "I am convinced," says Karl Heckel, "that the deeper we enter into the study of the Egyptian religion, the more clearly it is shown that the doctrine of metempsychosis was entirely foreign to the popular Egyptian religion; and that even that which single mysteries possessed of it was not inherent to the Osiris teachings, but derived from Hindu sources." Later on we find the Alexandrian Jews imbued with the doctrine of an individual soul, and the Pharisees of the time of Jesus not only had faith in an individual soul, but believed in its wanderings through various bodies; thus it is easy to find how Christ was looked upon as the incarnation of an older prophet.

Pythagoras is said to have been the first Greek who taught the doctrine of palingenesis among the Hellenes. As an Aryan race already burning their dead and believing in the doctrine of an individual soul, it was easy for the Greeks to accept the doctrine of Reincarnation, through the Pythagorean teaching. According to Apulejus, Pythagoras had come to India where he had been instructed by the Brahmins. . . Schopenhauer in his book "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung," speaking about palingenesis, says: "These constant new births, then, constitute the succession of the life-dreams of a will which in itself is indestructible, until, instructed and improved by so much and such various successive knowledge in a constantly new form it abolishes and abrogates itself. . . . . It must not be neglected that even empirical ground supports a palingenesis of this kind. As a matter of fact, there does exist a connection between the birth of the newly appearing beings and the death of those that are worn out. It shows itself in the great fruitfulness of the human race, which appears as a consequence of devastating diseases. . . Every new born being comes fresh and blithe into the new existence, and enjoys it as a free gift; but there is and can be nothing freely given. Its fresh existence is paid for by the old age and death of a worn-out existence which has perished, but which contained the indestructible seed out of which the new existence has arisen; they are one being." The great English philosopher Hume, nihilistic though

he was, also says in his sceptical essay on immortality: "The metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can listen to."

So far as explaining the tendencies of the present life by past conscious efforts goes, the reincarnationists of India and the latest school of evolutionists are one; the only difference is that the Hindus, as spiritualists, explain it by the conscious efforts of individual souls, and the materialistic school of evolutionists only by an hereditary physical transmission. The schools which hold to the theory of creation out of nothing are entirely out of court. The issue has to be fought out between the reincarnationists, who hold that all experiences are stored up as tendencies in the subject of those experiences, the individual soul, and are transmitted by reincarnation of that unbroken individuality, and the materialists, who hold that the brain is the subject of all actions and the transmission through cells. It is thus that the doctrine of Reincarnation assumes an infinite importance before our mind, for the fight between Reincarnation and mere cellular transmission is, in reality, the fight between spiritualism and materialism. If cellular transmission is the all-sufficient explanation, materialism is inevitable and there is no necessity for the theory of a soul. If it is not a sufficient explanation, the theory of an individual bringing into this life the experiences of the past is as absolutely true. There is no escape from the alternative, reincarnation or materialism. Which shall we accept?

KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

(Continued from January Number)

PART I.

XX

Nachiketas said: There is that (well known) doubt regarding what becomes of man after death. Some say he exists, others that he does not exist. This knowledge I desire to gain, being instructed by thee. Of the boons this is the third boon.

XXI

Yama replied: Even the Devas (Bright Ones) of old doubted regarding this. It is not easy to know; subtle indeed is this subject. O Nachiketas ask another boon. Do not press me. Give up asking this of me.

XXII

Nachiketas said: O Death, thou sayest that even the Devas had doubts about this, and that it is not easy to know. Another teacher like unto thee is not to be found. (Therefore) no other boon can be equal to this one.

XXIII

Yama said: Ask for sons and grandsons who shall live a hundred years, many cattle, elephants, gold and horses. Ask for lands of vast extent and live thyself as many autumns as thou desirest.

XXIV

If thou thinkest of any other boon equal to this, ask (for that)—wealth and long life; be ruler over

vast lands. O Nachiketas, I shall make thee enjoyer of all desires.

XXV

Whatsoever desires are difficult to obtain in the realm of mortals, ask them all as thou likest; these maidens with their chariots and musical instruments, such as are not obtainable by mortals—be served by these whom I give to thee. O Nachiketas, do not ask regarding death.

The third boon asked by Nachiketas concerning the great Hereafter was one which could be granted only to those who were freed from all mortal desires and limitations; therefore Yama first tested Nachiketas to see whether he was ready to receive such knowledge. "Do not press me regarding this secret," he said. "Even wise men cannot understand it and thou art a mere lad. Take rather long life, wealth, whatever will give thee happiness on the mortal plane." But the boy proved his strength and worthiness by remaining firm.

XXVI

Nachiketas said: O Death, these are fleeting; they weaken the vigor of all the senses in man. Even the longest life is short. Keep thou thy chariots, dance and music.

XXVII

Man cannot be satisfied by wealth. Shall we possess wealth when we see thee, [Death]? Shall we continue to live as long as thou rulest? Therefore that boon alone (which I have already asked) is to be chosen by me.

XXVIII

What man dwelling on the decaying mortal plane, having approached the undecaying immortal one, and having known the nature of pleasure produced from the beauty and contact of women (sense-pleasure), would delight in long life?

XXIX

O Death, that, regarding which there is doubt, of that great Hereafter, tell us. Nachiketas asks for no other boon than that which penetrates this secret.

PART II

I

Yama said: The good is one thing and the pleasant another. These two, having different ends, bind a man. It is well with him who of the two chooses the good. He who chooses the pleasant misses the true end (goal).

II

The good and the pleasant approach a mortal; the discriminative man looks on both and distinguishes between them; the wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the foolish man chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice.

III

O Nachiketas, after wise reflection thou hast renounced the pleasant and all pleasing forms. Thou hast not accepted this garland of great value (wealth) in which many mortals sink.

IV

Wide apart are these two,—ignorance and what is known as wisdom, leading in opposite directions,

producing different results. I believe Nachiketas to be one who longs for wisdom; since many desires have not turned thee aside (from the path).

With this second part Yama, the Ruler of Death, begins his instructions regarding the great Hereafter. There are two paths,—one leading Godward, which is *Sat* or good; the other leading to worldly pleasure, which merely gives satisfaction to the physical nature. He who follows one inevitably goes away from the other; because, like light and darkness, they conflict. One leads to the imperishable, spiritual realm; the other to the perishable, physical realm. Both confront a man at every step of life. The intelligent man, distinguishing between the two, chooses the Real and Eternal and he alone tastes true happiness; while the ignorant man, preferring that which brings him immediate and tangible results, misses the true purpose of his existence. There are some who gladly sacrifice their physical comfort for the sake of their soul; while others, who are attached to fleshly desires, are willing to sacrifice all that is good for their spiritual nature in order to gain momentary gratification. But Nachiketas was not like these. Although Yama put before him many temptations to test his sincerity and earnestness, he, judging them at their real value, refused them all, saying: "I have come from the mortal realm, shall I ask only for what is mortal? I desire that which is lasting, eternal." Therefore Death said to him: "I now see that thou art a sincere desirer of Truth, that thou art worthy of

the teaching. I offered thee name, fame, wealth, whatever tempts and deludes men, but thou hast proved thyself by rejecting them all."

V

Fools dwelling in ignorance, regarding themselves as wise and learned, go round and round in crooked ways, like blind men led by the blind.

VI

The Hereafter is never revealed to the child (the ignorant), being deluded by the glamour of wealth. "This visible world is (real), there is none other;" thinking thus, he comes under my sway again and again.

There are many in the world, who, although ignorant concerning the subtler things of the causal realm, yet, because they have a little book-learning or worldly knowledge, believe that they are wise and capable of guiding others. But lacking in true wisdom they themselves cannot see clearly, and therefore cannot make things clear to others. All that they say merely deepens the confusion in the minds of those who hear them. Hence they are likened to blind men leading the blind through false and devious paths. The future does not shine before such people, who, bewildered by the vanity of this world, have little power of discrimination and are easily carried away by the charm of fleeting objects. As children are tempted by toys, so they are deluded by the glamour of wealth, power, name and fame. To them these seem the only realities. Being thus attached to perishable things, they come

many times under the dominion of death. There is one part of us that must die; there is another part which never dies. When a man can identify himself with his indestructible spirit, which is one with God, then he overcomes death.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE VEDANTA CENTRE OF BOSTON

The Vedanta Centre of Boston celebrated its Fifth Anniversary on the evening of Jan. 1st, and the friends of the work gathered in such large numbers that the lecture hall scarcely sufficed to accommodate them. The exercises opened with an organ prelude, after which the Swami Paramananda delivered a short address of welcome. The Secretary then read a letter from one of the oldest and staunchest friends of the work in Boston, expressing his deep regret that he could not be present and adding: "May I be permitted to say that it gave me much pleasure to see what a large and interested audience was gathered together on Sunday last, showing that the good work was going on and getting a permanent hold among thinking people. 'First the blade, then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear' is the law of growth, which you are obeying, it appears to me." A history of the Centre was next given by one of the members. It passed in review the modest inception of the work—how the Swami Paramananda, coming to Boston at the close of 1908, had begun without any fixed headquarters, delivering lectures in a public hall, holding classes in private drawing-rooms, and going out into the surrounding towns wherever he was asked to speak or teach, sometimes conducting three meetings in one day. Courses of lectures were arranged for him in Milton, Brookline, Cam-

bridge, Waltham, and he was invited to lecture at the Lynn Public Library, where he met with warm appreciation. The following autumn he was obliged to seek a milder climate during the mid-winter season. He therefore went to Washington and while there organized a Vedanta Centre, which remained under the charge of Sister Devamata after his return to Boston in April of the same year (1910). Again back in Boston, the Swami secured the present headquarters. This at once gave to the Centre a more definite constitution. Regular Sunday Services and week-day classes were immediately begun and have continued almost without interruption ever since. In addition to the Boston work, the Swami has also from time to time given courses of lectures in Europe, thus broadening the field and creating international relations for the Centre.

One of the most encouraging features of the work, especially during the last two years, has been the rapid growth of the Publication Department. 10,000 books and pamphlets having been published during that short period, among these being two hitherto unpublished lectures by Swami Vivekananda, a volume of lectures by Swami Ramakrishnananda and a translation from the Sanskrit of the Bhagavad-Gita by Swami Paramananda. "The Path of Devotion," one of the Swami's own books, has also been translated into French and brought out in Switzerland; and the same work is soon to be printed in Gujarati, one of the dialects of the West Coast of India. Besides this, nearly 5000 books and pamphlets have gone into circulation from the Centre. The appearance of "The Message of the East" two years ago marked an important step forward. Despite its modest form, it has already found a place on the tables of over 100 of

the leading libraries of the country, each library having expressed the desire to receive it and place it on their permanent files. Following this report, the Swami spoke a few words of thanks to all those who had contributed towards the establishment and growth of the Centre by their loving service, and offered a prayer that the work, humble though it may be, might increase in power and usefulness and continue to bring blessing and help to many.

A special Hindu dish prepared by the Swami himself was then served with fruits and sweetmeats and the evening closed with an informal social gathering.

* * *

The course of six public lectures which Swami Paramananda is giving in Perkins Hall, Women's Educational and Industrial Union, began most successfully on Jan. 18. There was a large and representative audience, which listened attentively to what the Swami had to say on "The Religious Ideal for this Age." The course will continue through February and the subjects will be: "Concentration and Self-Control,' "Reincarnation and Final Emancipation," "Building of Character," "Harmony of Religions." All the meetings at the Centre will remain the same and at the regular Service on Sunday morning the Swami will give a series of Talks on the Sacred Scriptures of India.

* * *

In response to the earnest desire of the students and friends of the Washington Centre Sister Devamata has arranged to spend the month of February in Washington. While there, she will deliver a lecture every Sunday evening at 8, and hold classes on Wednesday and Friday at the same hour. Her address during her stay will be 7 Iowa Circle.

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The Message of the East

MARCH 1914

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III MARCH, 1914 No. 3

Man must learn to distinguish between the real and the unreal, between the eternal and the non-eternal, between what is good for the soul and what is merely pleasing to the body. Many avenues lie open before us. Certain objects appeal to the senses, and when the mind is fickle, these carry it away; but if our discriminative faculty is awakened and guides us, we are safe, for then nothing can really delude us. Various things come in disguise and try to make us believe that they are real, that we should give them our whole-hearted devotion, but a wise man knows them at their true value. He is not deceived by outward appearances, therefore he can easily drop what is non-essential. Through the practice of discrimination, the mind becomes like a crystal. It is so clear that it reflects the right color of all things, and can at once perceive the real nature of whatever approaches it.

When discrimination is thus well established, the result is non-attachment. That which seemed so vital, so absolutely a part of us that we thought we could not live without it, falls off by itself. No violent struggle is necessary. What brings this

change? It is the purification of our vision. We see what is real and what is unreal, what is essential and what is non-essential, and the non-essential drops away naturally. This is what is meant by renunciation. It means withdrawing the mind from the unreal and focusing it on the Real. But we must not imagine that those who renounce the non-essential and devote their whole heart to things which are essential, are losing the beauty and joy of life. Do you suppose that Buddha could have given up all that people desire most unless he knew that there was something more vital? It was because he had found a higher joy, a greater beauty, which made all the wealth and luxury of his princely state appear as nothing to him. Whenever we come in touch with the Supreme Reality, when our discrimination leads us to That, all else seems insignificant. When the spirit of renunciation awakens in a man, then the things of this world can no longer content him. He feels oppressed by the fetters of unreality and imperfection and cannot rest until he finds that supreme treasure, the Light of Truth.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

If you put any purifying substance, like a piece of alum, into a vessel of muddy water, the water is purified and the impurities settle down at the bottom. *Viveka* (discrimination of the Real or God, from unreal, phenomenal appearances) and

Vairagya (non-attachment to the world) are the two purifiers of the human heart. With their help the mind of the worldly man ceases to be worldly and becomes pure. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

For what rational cause remains any more to the man who has gained "the light inaccessable" for reverting to the good things of the world? . . He does not withdraw himself from life. But he has withdrawn his soul from passions. For it were no longer seemly that the friend of God should fall into pleasures or fears, and be occupied in the repression of passions.

—*Clement of Alexandria.*

Children (the ignorant) follow after outward pleasures and fall into the snare of wide-spread death. Wise men only, knowing the nature of what is immortal, do not look for anything stable here among things unstable.

The good is one thing, the pleasant another; these two, having different ends, chain a man. It is well with him who clings to the good; he who chooses the pleasant misses his end . . . . The wise prefers the good to the pleasant, but the fool chooses the pleasant through greed and avarice.

—*Katha-Upanishad.*

The wise man can lose nothing of whose loss he will be sensible, for he is the property of virtue alone, from whom he can never be taken away . . . The possession of all things which come from without is slippery and insecure . . . But here a man comes forward to prove that one

who is but of human birth can raise himself above human necessities, can tranquilly behold pains, losses, diseases, wounds, can bear adversity with calm and prosperity with moderation, that he can remain the same amid all varieties of fortune and think nothing to be his own save himself and himself too only as regards his better part.

—*Seneca.*

He who calls nothing his own, who is poor and free from love of the world, him I call indeed a Brahmana (a true God-seeker).

Those whose mind is well grounded in the elements of (true) knowledge, who have given up all attachment and rejoice without clinging to anything, those whose frailties have been conquered and who are full of light, are free even in this world. —*Buddha* (*Dhammapada*).

And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake shall receive an hundred-fold and shall inherit eternal life. —*Jesus the Christ.*

Unless too a man be disentangled from all creatures, he cannot freely attend unto divine things. For that is the reason why there are few contemplative men to be found, because few have the knowledge to withdraw themselves fully from things about to perish and from creatures.

—*Thomas à Kempis.*

UNION WITH GOD THROUGH NON-ATTACHMENT

Class Talk by Swami Ramakrishnananda

"The very mention of whose (Divine) name purifies us, and illuminates the hearts of all those who have the desire to hear the Lord; because He is always the Friend of the good." All the miseries that are to be found in the hearts of men He destroys. Miseries are always inside man and not outside. We think they are outside, but this is not the fact. If you take a log of wood, cut it, burn it, it will not mind. Why? Because it is not conscious. But take a man, insult him, hurt him, and he will feel it. Why? Because he is conscious. Where is this consciousness? Inside. And where inside? It is centered in the heart, not in the brain. A man may have his brain injured, still his consciousness continues, although his mind may be deranged; but injure the heart and at once consciousness leaves the body. This shows that the chief seat of consciousness is in the heart. Now good and evil, victory and defeat, profit and loss, only exist when we are conscious of them; that is, they exist in consciousness, therefore they must be inside.

The ordinary man of the world believes that all miseries are outside him and beyond his control. For that reason he is so miserable. But when man has no attachment for earthly things, when he realizes that behind the world there is an Almighty Power, who is all-friendly, then his mind will be directed more and more away from the world and

towards this all-powerful and all-friendly Being. He will seek out those people who will talk to him of God; and he will try to go to those places where men have realized God. These are called holy places because of the holy men who have lived there. As a man goes more and more to such places and talks more and more with such men, the love of the world will gradually leave him and he will come nearer to God.

Since, furthermore, he is a conscious being, he must work in consciousness, and through this he finds that good and evil are all inside. He sees that he is only happy because he is conscious that he is happy; and he is unhappy only because he is conscious of being unhappy; that in consciousness all evil exists, in consciousness all happiness exists; so he learns to go within himself for everything. God teaches him that if the mind can be detached from the outside world, then no evil will exist for him. Matter is the cause of all misery, of all misfortune. The less we have to do with matter, the better it is for us. As the man's mind becomes pure, he learns this lesson. God purifies his mind and he sees all within himself. He also sees himself in all beings. God with reference to His creation is finite; He is infinite as to His mind and as to His consciousness. God never sleeps. He is always conscious. So in this world we also only know different states of consciousness,—the waking state, the dream and the sound sleep state. Thus we are conscious and God is conscious; and it be-

comes evident that if we want God, we shall have to search Him out in our inner consciousness. We must always seek consciousness in consciousness. Just as we must seek a bird among birds, not among beasts; in the same way we must not search for God in unconsciousness. What is unconscious? Matter is dead and unconscious, therefore God must not be sought in matter. We must seek Him in consciousness, that is, inside our own self.

You may say that God may be found outside; but in reality the world does not exist apart from your consciousness. You may be very devoted to your father and mother, but you fall asleep and forget them. Why? Because he who knows them has gone away, the conscious self has gone away from the senses, from the mind; therefore the external world no longer exists for him. When that conscious self comes back to his senses and his mind, you remember them. Therefore you see that consciousness alone really exists for you, all else is forgotten.

The soul alone is beginningless and endless. That world which you expect to continue to exist after you leave it, exists in the universal mind, and that universal mind exists in the universal consciousness. But the small world which exists in your individual mind dies with you. There are two parallel creations, as we can show. What takes place in the universal creation may not take place in your creation. Suppose, for example, that a man has gone away to Bengal. Now in God's creation his only child dies, but he does not know

of it for fifteen days. During this time the death does not exist in his creation at all. He still thinks of his child as living, eating, playing in just the same way as when he was with it. Then the news reaches him and the moment that he hears of it the child dies in his world. This shows that there are two distinct creations. The consciousness in the universal mind, however, is the same as that behind your individual mind. They are not separate, for the infinite consciousness is one so if you can make your individual mind merge into the universal mind, then you will no longer be able to distinguish your mind from the universal mind. When a devotee or *Bhakta*, therefore wants to go to God, he does the same thing as the *Gnani*, who seeks to go behind his own consciousness to God's consciousness.

At present we live in the external world and we believe that all our happiness and misery exist there. But when we begin to search inside, we find that all things exist within ourselves; that all consciousness is there. This is what is called introspection. Introspection is searching for God within. The more we practice this, the nearer we come to God. At first a man may not understand it practically; but the moment he realizes his own nature, he will see that he is self-existent and independent of the external world. Then he will say: "I cannot have come out of matter, I am spirit. I have come out of spirit and to spirit I must go back. And where is spirit? Inside. Therefore to go to spirit I must go within." He

sees that all his environments are material, while he is spiritual; so he ceases to depend on his environment; and as he detaches himself from his environment, with it his sense of "I" and "Mine" vanishes.

Such ideas little by little destroy his attachment towards the world. Then gradually as with the sword of non-attachment all the ties of the world are cut off, he goes deeper into his own existence and finds God. At that moment his individual world disappears, he merges into God's creation and becomes one with Him. Suppose there are two fields, one higher than the other. The upper field is full of water. Now if you cut a channel, the water will flow naturally into the lower field, until the water rises to the level of the upper field. Then the surfaces are no longer two, they become like one unbroken body of water. So when the devotee goes to God and draws only inspiration from God, then God's thought flows naturally into his heart and there remains no difference between him and his Lord. For that reason Sri Ramakrishna teaches us that God and His devotee are one and the same.

God cannot be seen by all men. Being infinite, He cannot be perceived by the senses, but if the devotee merges himself in God, God's thoughts become his thoughts and he cannot commit any blunder. Then people begin to come to him for counsel, because what he says is regarded as God's word. These are called the Saints and Seers, because their mind is one with God's mind. The

moment a man becomes a little introspective and tries to go to God, God at once comes to him, purifies him of all past Karma, and makes him one with Himself. Thus the Bhagavan (Lord) and His devotee actually become one.

By associating with the holy and pure, the mind grows pure, attachment for the world decreases and attachment for God increases until the world slips off entirely. Then as oil flows from a bottle in an unbroken stream, so the whole thought flows to God without any break. All restlessness of body goes; all sense desire disappears. The mind is no longer disturbed or changed by these. It no longer concerns itself with the outside world. It becomes quiet and serene, as if the innumerable struggles of many lives had come to an end. When it thus grows calm and peaceful, when there is no wave or ripple on its quiet surface, in such a pure unruffled mind the true nature of God is seen. At that time, when a man realizes God inside himself, all fetters of the mind are broken asunder, all troubles disappear, all doubts are cleared off and man's life-long struggle ceases. But this is only possible when he is not held by any attachment to the world. When he realizes everything, he gets everything. By loving God and having non-attachment to the world all things come to him. For this reason wise men make it a point to love God above all other things, because that alone can bring peace to the mind and nothing else. They strive therefore to cultivate devotion towards God in order that they may realize Him and attain to peace.

THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh
(Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East".)

Act III. Scene I.

Siddhartha or Buddha (*after seeing the old man, the diseased and the dead, he now comes upon a religious mendicant*):— Look! Look! See the orange-colored cloth, the serene face, the water-jar. Behold that man approaching slowly. Tell me, O driver, what is this mystery?

Sarati (*the driver*):—Casting off all desires and free from worldly ties, he wanders from door to door, living on alms. Banishing all thought of pleasure, he meditates on God in solitude. He has no desire save to worship the Supreme Lord.

Siddhartha:—Where is the Supreme Lord? Where is His abode? I have been told that the three worlds are His creation. Why then disease, sorrow and old age? Why all this misery in the world? Why death? What the offense of all creatures that they should constantly endure such misery? A father can never bear to see his children suffer. But this world is a vast ocean of suffering. Human beings have to endure unending pain. Why then does the Supreme Lord not relieve them? They are crying out in sickness and in sorrow, does this not reach Him? Or is the Lord helpless to remove their pain? There must be some mystery behind all this. The explanations of the Scriptures are vain. The authors of the Scriptures must be ignorant. If God

is all-mighty, then He is not merciful. Drive my chariot swiftly. I shall go to my father and take leave of him. Henceforth I shall wander over the earth in quest of light. If I can find a remedy for the sorrow of this world, I shall proclaim it from land to land and from man to man. My heart weeps to see all this wretchedness. No longer can I remain within palace walls. No longer can I be tied by attachment. I shall not spend my life in idleness. If in this great work my body falls, at the hour of death I shall console my mind by saying, "I have done my best."

Scene II.

The King and His Minister.

King:—This must be a trick of the gods. How else came that aged man, the diseased, the dead, that religious mendicant? The guards kept careful watch on every highway and I myself guarded the main road.

Minister:—True, Sire. It is a trick of the gods. Whence they came and whither they went, no one saw. The guards can find no trace of them. They appeared and in an instant vanished.

King:—This is all but my unhappy destiny.

(*Siddhartha enters.*)

Siddhartha:—Father, my salutation to thy feet! I have come to take leave of thee O, Father, be gracious and grant me thy consent. Laying my homage at thy feet, I would abandon my home and set out in quest of Truth.

King:—O, my beloved son, why dost thou launch this thunderbolt at me in my declining years? Look-

ing at thy lovely face, I have forgotten pain, forgotten even my beloved wife. This world no longer seems an empty place. Thou art to me as eyes to the blind, as a lamp in a dark room. I have naught else but thee in all the world. Thou art my all-in-all, my jewel, the ornament of this kingdom. Thou art the sole support of the Sakya race. Take the throne. Whatever thou hast need of, I will give thee at once. Tell me, my son, why this detachment? Why this wish to renounce all? If thou goest, tell me, by looking at whose face shall I keep life and courage in this heart? I have no other son but thee. The mere utterance of such words brings darkness all about me, and I feel the life ebbing from my heart. Hear me, dearest one! My heart will burst. Speak no more these piercing words."

Siddhartha:—Unreal is this world, the abode of disease and misery. Death pursues at every step and spreads his net on every side. Wherefore then shall I live on in fetters? Youth does not endure forever; old age attacks it. There is no fixed hour for the blow of death to fall. This world is not mine. If I do not leave it willingly, yet today or a few years hence I shall be forced to leave it. Why then shall I remain bound by attachment? If I can, I shall remove the misery of the world. O, Lord of men, place no obstacle in the way of that work. Since it is certain that the body must fall, why bring the delusion of attachment by calling me thy son? Who is whose son? For whose sake shall I remain forever enshrouded by the

gloom of ignorance? For this great work's sake, father, cast off such weakness. Bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled.

King:—Thou art surely made of stone. What King's son has ever renounced his home? Since thy birth thou hast never known the smallest hardship. Now, clad in beggar's rags, with begging-bowl in hand, how canst thou wander from door to door? Who will care for thee? Tell me, how can I find the heart to bid thee go? Do not kill me. Speak no more such hard words, my beloved. Without thee this kingdom will be transformed into a wilderness and the Sakya race will be destroyed. Why cause the ruin of all? Thy beloved wife, too, will be desolate. And thy new born son, who will care for him? Who will console thy foster-mother, to whom thou art dearer than a son? Without wealth, religious merit cannot be earned (through the performance of charity and sacrifices, etc.) and of the different stages of life, the householder's is said to be the highest. Why then shouldest thou renounce thy home?

Siddhartha:—Tell me, Father, what religious practice can save one from the jaws of death? What spiritual merit can protect one's youth from the robbing hands of time? By performing what sacrifice can one withstand the onslaught of disease? Who is there wise enough to show a way by which the world's misery can be cured? Who, O Sire, can check the tide of suffering? It is for this I wish to go. For the sake of all living

creatures, I would go forth in quest of Truth, through whose glory all sorrows will be removed and this world will become an abode of bliss. Then all men will live drowned in unbroken joy. I have made a vow to gain that priceless treasure or to sacrifice this body. I desire no more these fleeting pleasures. Father, who knows? Tomorrow thou mayst become sonless through death's decree. Why then dost thou not give thy consent to this noble work? Hear, O my Father! I can no longer bear the sight of all this wretchedness. I must save these suffering creatures and reveal the light of wisdom by destroying the gloom of ignorance. O, revered Sire, bid me dedicate myself to this great work.

King:—Alas, my son! I am indeed luckless. I have not beheld the face of happiness.

Siddhartha:—There is no happiness in this wretched world. That is why, O Father, I wish to go in quest of happiness. I promise that if I find that priceless jewel, I shall bring it and offer it to thee. Be enduring, for the sake of this mighty task. Father, bid me go forth in search of the Ideal, O Lord of men! Be gracious for this great work's sake.

King:—Beloved son, speak no more. My days have been spent in weeping; my days will be spent in weeping. Return today to thy pleasure-garden. Tomorrow do as thou likest.

Siddhartha:—Bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled.

(To be continued in subsequent numbers.)

THE GREAT DRAMATIST OF BENGAL

Girish Chunder Ghosh (the author of the play given in part above) is known in his own country as "the Shakespeare of Bengalee literature" and "the Garrick of the Bengalee stage." He was a man of towering genius, and had he chosen to render even a small part of his work into English, he would undoubtedly have enjoyed as great a triumph in the West as has been recently bestowed on another gifted poet of Bengal. He wrote in all eighty dramas, with such force and impetuousness of inspiration that some of them, even ten acts in length, were completed in two or three days, while one of the most famous was written through in a single night. India's sacred Epics and Puranams or Minor Scriptures were the chief source from which he drew material for his plays. One by one he took up the mighty spiritual heroes of the ancient land of the Aryas and made them living, pulsing realities to the people of his time. In thus stimulating a new love for the old Ideals, he became all unconsciously a great religious teacher, wielding so strong an influence that more than once a man who entered his theatre a worldling left it a *Sannyasi* (one who has renounced all to go in search of Truth). Especially was this the case after he came in contact with Sri Ramakrishna, for from that moment a deeper and more definite spiritual note sounded through all that he produced.

Having once yielded himself up to the gentle, irresistible power of this God-inspired Teacher, the agonizing doubt and lawless pleasure-seeking of many years dropped from him and he became one of his most humble and devoted disciples. The story is told that when Sri Ramakrishna said to him that all he needed to do to be saved was to repeat the Lord's name twice in the day, Girish Ghosh replied: "I am a man of the world, Bhagavan, (Revered Sir). How can I be sure that I will remember to take the Lord's name even twice in the day?" Sri Ramakrishna answered: "Then take it but once a day and all will be well with you." Again the disciple in his sincerity confessed: "Bhagavan, I do not know that I can do even so much. This world makes one easily forget." "Very well, then," Sri Ramakrishna replied, "You need do nothing. Just give yourself over to me entirely." "That I do most willingly", was Girish Ghosh's quick answer. Thenceforth he became like a child in the simplicity of his faith, while all concern for his own glory was swallowed up in his burning eagerness to proclaim the glory of his Master, and to share with his fellow men the light that had come to him. He passed away two years ago. As he was battling with the dread disease (asthma), which carried him off, he cried out: "Lord, remove this foolish clinging to the flesh." At once quietness settled down upon him, and with the words "Come let us go," he left the body.

REPORTS

We are glad to learn that the Government has undertaken to acquire for the Ramakrishna Ashrama or Home of Service at Kankhal in the Himalayas a plot of land adjoining the present hospital on which it is hoped to erect three new wards. The steady growth of this branch of the Ramakrishna Mission has been most encouraging. It began in 1901, under the direct inspiration of Swami Vivekananda as a modest relief work with only temporary quarters, and during the first 18 months of its existence it brought medical aid to 1054 patients. Now it has a house of its own, to which a new Phthisis Ward was added last year; and its most recent report, just received, shows that in the 12 months under review 9388 sick of all casts and creeds were cared for. As an adjunct to his medical work, Swami Kalyanananda, who has been tireless in his devotion to the institution from the beginning has opened a night school for poor boys, and has taken two orphans to maintain and educate.

* * *

The Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Thursday evening, Jan. 22nd. A number of friends gathered to pay their homage to the great Teacher. The exercises began with music and a silent prayer. The Swami Paramananda then rose and delivered an impressive address on the lesson of Swami Vivekananda's life. He spoke with deep feeling of his Masters all-embracing heart, which could never see suffering or distress without striving to relieve it; of his great spirit of renunciation; of his unfailing tolerance and compassion towards all men and all religions, a tolerance based on direct knowledge of the One underlying all the diversity of the world.

One of the members then spoke briefly of Swami Vivekananda, not as teacher or prophet, orator or writer, but as the elder brother of mankind. He was too humble, too full of devout reverence for his Master Sri Ramakrishna, to covet the place of leader. To him all men were his Master's children, hence his brothers, and as such he sought to love, serve and watch over them. When Sri Ramakrishna was passing away, His last words to this, His mightiest disciple, were, "Naren, take care of my boys," pointing to the younger disciples, and Swami Vivekananda had followed this parting admonition with unflinching faithfulness, extending its application to the whole human race.

In closing, Swami Paramananda told how widespread was the observance of this anniversary in India, where it was annually celebrated in hundreds of cities and villages, not merely by official exercises, but by feeding thousands of poor people, for Swami Vivekananda's religion was above all a religion of loving service. After chanting and a short meditation, the blessed fruits and sweetmeats from the altar were distributed, and the meeting came to a close.

The Birthday Anniversary was also observed at the Vedanta Centres of New York and San Francisco.

* * *

The course of six public lectures, which Swami Paramananda has just completed at Perkins Hall in the Women's Educational and Industrial Union, proved even more successful than had been anticipated. Every Sunday a large audience gathered bringing each time a certain number who were hearing of Vedanta for the first time. Among these some became so deeply impressed with the force and value of the teaching that they have

since sought to affiliate themselves with the Centre. In presenting his subject, the Swami made an especial effort to relate it to the Western point of view and make clear to his listeners that Vedanta had not come to the West as a substitute for existing forms of faith, but to offer a practical method by which each soul might attain the highest in his own chosen religious path. He layed great stress throughout on the oneness of Truth, whatever its forms of expression; and reminded his hearers that although science and mechanical invention had accomplished wonders in binding the whole external world together, the work of unification would not be complete and a true civilization reached until a spirit of universal tolerance and sympathy had made all hearts one. The religious ideal for this age, he said, must be inclusive, not exclusive; it must be based on points of union, not of divergence. It must be broad enough to embrace all phases of religious belief and all aspects of God.

* * *

The active interest and appreciation manifested during Sister Devamata's visit to Washington was a source of deep gratification to all those who had been instrumental in arranging for her coming. The attendance at all the meetings throughout the month was excellent. Not only the old students, but also new ones attended the lectures and classes regularly; and some, wishing to profit to the full by the opportunity offered, came almost daily to ask questions and receive individual help. It is now intended to reconstitute the Washington Centre as a branch of the Vedanta Centre of Boston, making its members associate members of the Boston Centre; and it is probable that a short season of classes and lectures will be given every winter in Washington.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. APRIL, 1914 No. 4

Realization of God cannot be gained haphazard. There is a regular method. You must first hear, then understand, then realize. You must know that the light is there, otherwise you may travel in the diametrically opposite direction to find it. Next you must hear from a teacher how to go to it. Then you must understand clearly what it is; and when you have understood, realization will follow. But for God to come, you must want Him and nothing else. Sri Krishna says in the Gita: "This *Maya* (outer phenomenal creation), with which I have covered myself, no one can pierce through. They only can penetrate it who take refuge at My feet." And again: "If you would gain wisdom or the knowledge of your infinite nature, you must go to one who has realized his infinite nature, serve him humbly, then set forth your doubts and you will be illumined." Destruction of ego can only be effected by humility. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna used to say that as water flows off from high ground and collects in the low places, so the grace of God runs off from the heart puffed up with vanity and gathers in the hearts of the humble.

Above all, endue your heart with devotion and your mind will naturally turn towards God. The story is told that one day in the forest Rama and Lakshmana stopped by a clear stream to rest. There they saw a crow apparently parched with thirst, yet each time it went to the water's edge, it would turn and come back without drinking. "What a foolish crow this must be", said Lakshmana, "to be suffering from thirst here on the bank of a stream of cool water and yet not drink a single drop." "Do not judge so hastily, my brother," Rama replied. "This crow is a great devotee of God, who is constantly repeating His name. Whenever he goes down to the water to drink, he remembers that, to do so, he must for an instant cease to take the name of the Lord and he cannot do that, so again he comes back without drinking". . . . . Such is the true *Bhakta* (devotee or disciple). He never thinks of himself. He is so full of the thought of God that his own self is forgotten.

Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Till the mind be purged, the affection purified, the memory naked, the understanding brightened, the will denied and set afire, the soul can never arrive at the intimate and effective union with God; and, therefore, because the spirit of God is purity itself, and light and rest, the soul (where He intends to make His abode) must have great purity, peace, attention and quiet. —*Michael de Molinos.*

DISCIPLINE AND DISCIPLESHIP

By Sister Devamata

Discipline is the condition of growth. Throughout all Nature we find it. The field is disciplined when the ploughshare furrows it, as the harrow smoothes it, when the harvest is reaped; for discipline is nothing but the shaping of crude material into more useful forms, the pruning and trimming to stimulate new life. The undisciplined or uncultivated plant is like a weed or bramble. The undisciplined animal must stay at large in the jungle. It is not safe for him to come into the habitation of man. And the human being who is not disciplined is like the bramble or the wild beast. He is not fit to be among men.

But discipline presupposes one who disciplines. Self-discipline is practically impossible in the early stages of either physical or spiritual development. As in natural science it is recognized that any object will move indefinitely along the line of least resistance unless checked or diverted by some stronger force, so man, if left to himself, revolves round and round in the same orbit. He does not rise or expand, because he does not escape from his ego, from his own small standards of measurement. He needs some propelling power from without to force him to enlarge his orbit, to climb to a higher level. Without a gardener to graft and prune, the wild flowers of the field would never be transformed into the luxuriant blossoms of our gardens. Without someone to breed and train, the untamed

horse of the forest would never become the fleet racer. And this guiding, impelling power is as essential in the world of man as in the lower kingdoms.

The one way to make a human being better is to lift him out of his self-consciousness. He can broaden only by transcending his ego, for it is this little self that shuts him in and limits him. Yet so long as we have nothing to take the place of this ego, it must possess us. We are like little children left at home alone with a rough servant. We may know that we are the sons of the house and have the right to command, but the servant can overrule us by the virtue of his greater strength until the master of the house comes and orders him to go. So this ego, although really a servant, lords it over us; and there is only one who can drive it out—that is God. But He must come to us first in some concrete form. At present our own little self is the most definite thing we know. To push it out there must be something equally definite. This is one of the weakest points in the practice of religion in the West. God is kept far off. To make Him definite or concrete is regarded as superstition. Religion also remains vague and abstract. Vedanta, on the contrary, declares that if we would attain the highest, religion and God must become as definite to us as our material life. Our spiritual education must be as systematic and precise as our secular education. We must have our school bench and teacher. We must have clearly

defined duties, fixed lessons to learn, a higher authority to bow to, a pure exalted ego to put in the place of our unpurified, unsanctified ego, someone to serve and follow.

This bending to authority in religion is regarded as offensive and dangerous by many; but the only danger in it is when the authority is not a proper one, when the teacher is not illumined and devoid of all selfish interest. For us to say that we acknowledge no authority but God is the same as for the little boy in the primary school to refuse to recognize any other authority than the chief of the department of education, whom he has never seen. It merely means that he remains self-willed and undisciplined. We cannot pass suddenly from the lowest to the highest. We cannot directly supplant the concrete by the abstract. We must move gradually up the scale from the gross to the subtle; and at every step a "mediator" between us and the Ultimate Ideal is needed,—some one to set us the fresh copy at the top of the page, some one to draw the new figure on the blackboard and give us the next theorem to demonstrate. Before we can form a true conception of Christ, we must see some one living the Christ-life. Before we can learn to define holiness, purity, consecration, we must find them embodied in some lofty character. That is what Christ meant when He said: "I am the Way". He did not mean that merely believing on Him would make a man holy. Do we not know people who have believed on Jesus for fifty years and are

as far as ever from the Christ Ideal? No, He meant: "Walk as I have walked, resist temptation as I have resisted it, rise above the world as I have risen above it, then you will attain Truth".

In our spiritual childhood, however, it is almost impossible for us to do this alone. We reach out instinctively for a tangible example to follow, for some one who will give us an effective method and teach us its application by his own life and action. The finding of the *Guru* or teacher therefore becomes the most vital concern in the soul's life, and for that reason in India it has from earliest times been made the foundation of all religious education. The great Vedic Scriptures are indeed in largest part nothing but a record of discipleship:—Nachiketas learning the Secret of Death from Yama; Indra gaining through long service the knowledge of the Self from Prajapati; Maitreyi sitting at the feet of Yajnavalkya to be taught the lesson of immortality; or still further back, the unknown Rishi or Seer giving answer in the Rig-Veda to that earnest seeker who sought him out and asked to "know that by knowing which all else can be known". Always in every line one catches the ring of the spoken word and sees the picture of the loving teacher patiently dispelling the doubt in the questioning heart of the disciple, who through years perhaps of humble service—bringing water from the stream and firewood from the jungle—has become like a son in the household. From those Vedic days the Indian method has not varied and

it is this which explains the great spiritual heights reached by the Indo-Aryans; for just as the system of apprenticeship invariably develops a high standard of excellence in the arts and crafts, so the system of discipleship as surely brings a lofty vision in the realm of spirit.

The disciple is an apprentice, learning the practice of religion through service and association. We too often imagine that taking up the spiritual life means reading many books about God, spending long hours in meditation, withdrawing from outer occupations. But, on the contrary, according to the Indian system, it means working with hands and feet, following the path of humble service. Why? To curb and quiet the ego. Unless there is silence within, God's voice cannot be heard. "Be still and know that I am God", the Bible tells us. But it is not possible for the beginner to attain this stillness all at once. He must work off his untamed energies, just as a child must work off his over-exuberance of animal spirits. He must purge his outer and inner nature by properly directed activity, as we purify our physical organism by wholesome exercise; for until he has tried out the denser part of his nature, which obscures the Divine, he cannot know the Truth.

We all have the possibility of the ultimate Truth in us. There is no one of us who has not at this very moment the Supreme God in his heart. We only exist because He is there. Our outer life goes on only because it is touching at its core that Eter-

nal Life. We have this glimmering of knowledge that guides us from day to day only because it is a part, a ray, going out from that Infinite Knowledge. We only feel these little fleeting waves of joy because for an instant we have touched, though dimly, the great divine bliss of the Eternal. That is there, existing in our hearts now. We do not have to go anywhere outside to find it. We have only to learn where to go within ourselves. At present that light is covered over by the veils of impurity which we have drawn across it. It is because we have lived in ourselves; we have worked for ourselves and for those who are related only to ourselves. We have made ourselves so entirely commensurate with this little self that we cannot imagine anything bigger and so the great Self has been obscured and forgotten. Now what we must do from day to day is to clear away the impurities which cover it. This clearing away is what we call discipline. How can it better be accomplished than by serving one who has torn the veil and seen the Self? The easiest way to knowledge always is to live with one who knows. Spend even a few weeks in the house of a naturalist and you will learn the nature and habits of every winged and crawling creature. Similarly, associate with a holy, God-enlightened soul and God-knowledge must as surely come, although perforce more slowly, since the faculties by which He may be apprehended must be unfolded.

But where can such teachers be found? you will

ask. In this busy commercial age saints and sages are not seated at every crossing. True. Yet have no doubt that the teacher and the teaching will come when you are ready. Never can you fail to know the Truth when you really hunger and thirst for it. If you do not know it today, it is because your hunger is so slight or because the hunger for worldly things is greater. You may say: "I do not hunger for them." Yes, you may not do so consciously; but the fact that you suffer when your desires are thwarted shows that you are hungering for them; the very fact that though your life seems empty, yet you do not turn to God to fill it, shows that you still want it to be filled by worldly things. Many people think that they want God, but they have not actually the least desire for Him. Often a man is unhappily married and he says, "Marriage is a great mistake"; but his wife dies, and in a year he marries again, which proves that what he wanted was not a life of renunciation, but a good wife. Our environment is unpleasant to us, we have many things to bear, and so we imagine that we are tired of the world and ready for higher things. But let God offer us a pleasant life, a little more money, a happy home, and we are perfectly satisfied. This shows that what we wanted was not God, or the religious life, it was a happy worldly life. So we must not deceive ourselves. We must prove that we want the Truth, and the only way we can prove it is by bearing cheerfully and bravely whatever discipline is given us, whether by the teacher or by life.

In the Chandogya-Upanishad we read of a boy, Satyakama, who went to a sage and said: "I wish to be a pupil in your house. May I come to you, Sir?" The sage, desiring to know what previous training he had received, asked: "Of what family art thou?" Satyakama replied: "I do not know, Sir, of what family I am. I asked my mother and she answered: In my youth when I had to move about much as a servant, I conceived thee. I do not know of what family thou art. I am Jabala, thou art Satyakama." And the boy added: "Therefore, Sir, I am Jabala Satyakama". He spoke with such humility, with such simplicity, with such absence of all vanity and pride that the Sage was touched and exclaimed: "No one but a true Brahmana (God-seeker) would thus speak out. Go and fetch fuel, my friend, and I shall initiate Thee. Thou hast not swerved from the Truth." Having initiated him, he gave him four hundred of his leanest, poorest cows to tend; and as the boy drove them out into the jungle, he said to himself: "I shall not return until I can bring back a thousand". So he dwelt a number of years in the forest, unmindful of loneliness or weariness or danger, intent only on serving his master with faithful devotion. One day a bull in the herd spoke to him, saying: "Satyakama, we have become a thousand. Lead us to the house of the teacher". And he added: "I will tell you one part of Brahman (Supreme Truth)". Then he gave him a first lesson. On the morrow Satyakama drove the herd home-

ward. And when they came towards the evening, "he lighted a fire, penned the cows, laid wood on the fire, and sat down behind the fire, looking to the East." Then Fire (Agni) spoke to him and taught him something more of Brahman. Thus each day at nightfall as he sat behind the fire in meditation, facing eastward, some humble creature —a swan, a diver-bird—came and revealed to him more of Truth, until when he reached the house of his teacher, the sage said to him: "Friend, you shine like one who knows Brahman. Who then has taught you?" Satyakama answered: "Not men. But, Sir, I wish that you only should teach me. For I have heard, from wise men like you, that only knowledge which is learned from an illumined teacher leads to real good." Then the sage taught him the same knowledge.

When the heart has been purified through selfless service, then God's voice will speak to us through everything and even Nature's dumb creatures will become our teachers. It is said in India that if the wife serves her husband with pure devotion and selflessness, or if the mother cares for her child with complete self-effacement, Truth will well up in her heart. Whatever Ideal we may take, if we serve it with our whole mind and soul, forgetful of self, forgetful of the world, we shall become so purged that Truth will reveal itself within us. Even the simple daily tasks in the household may be made a practice in discipleship, if done for God with prayerful humility. The complaint that we

cannot find the teacher is nothing but the unconscious admission that we are not worthy to find him. Or if we find him and cry out against any of the discipline of life that comes through him, we are not worthy to keep him. Christ, when He went up into the wilderness, bore true discipline. In those forty days He set an example of perfect discipleship. He did not think of his own comfort or bodily needs. He thought only of His Ideal, of His Father in Heaven, and when temptations came He was able to resist them. Before that He had served humbly and obscurely. It is such quiet, steady, selfless service which alone prepares us for the final victory. But service is not merely a positive thing. Negative service, the service of mute endurance for the sake of the Ideal, also purifies.

He who has felt the call of Truth in his heart turns away from no misfortune or hardship. When troubles and difficulties arise, he accepts them cheerfully, thinking: "Behold another opportunity to wipe out a little more of myself", and so he embraces with joy the greatest trial. Such is the spirit of discipleship; and only when that spirit comes does self-discipline become possible. Till then we must be like little children in school, taking our lessons from someone else. But always must we learn them for ourselves. Each human being must literally work out his own salvation, just as he must acquire his own education. The mother may prepare the food, but the child must eat it; so the teacher can only give the knowledge, the labor of

digesting and assimilating must always rest with the disciple. A great sage in India once said to me: "The work of the *Guru* or Spiritual teacher is like this: You are riding a bicycle in the wrong direction, someone comes and turns you round. You keep on pedalling just the same, but now you ride with new hope and confidence because you know you are headed towards your destination and have some one to guide you along the way".

But we must not have any selfish end in view in our practice of discipleship. We must not wish to know God that our face may shine. It will remain in darkness forever so long as we have that desire. We must not seek to know God in order even that we may be happy. The true disciple longs to know God for the sake of God. If some dearly beloved one comes to us, do we ask, "What have you brought me?" No; the coming itself is enough. The joy of the presence of the beloved, the gladness of having him there to serve and tend, is all we want. So when God comes, it must not be to make this little life of ours more beautiful; it must be that this little life may flow out and be lost in that great Divine Life. It must not be to make these little surroundings of ours more easy. It must be to make us forget where we are and what our life is. As it is said in a Sufi poem:

"He who sees his Master's face,
Will not in his prayers recall
That he is chastised at all."

When God comes, we shall not remember our

little joys and sorrows. We shall not even remember the prayer that we meant to utter when we stood in the Lord's presence. We shall only remember God. Then the time of discipline is gone and we shall taste the joy of true discipleship.

THE KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART II

(Continued from the February Number)

VII

He (The Self) of Whom many are not even able to hear, Whom many cannot comprehend even after hearing, wonderful is the teacher (of the Self), wonderful is he who can receive (the knowledge of Him) when taught by an able teacher.

Throughout the Vedic Scriptures it is declared that no one can impart Spiritual knowledge unless he has realization. What is meant by realization? Is it intellectual understanding only? No; it means knowledge based on direct perception. In India often the best teachers have no learning, but their character is so shining that every one learns from them merely by coming in contact with them. In one of the Scriptures we read: Under a banyan tree sat a youthful teacher and beside him an aged disciple. The mind of the disciple was full of doubts and questions, but although the teacher continued

silent, gradually every doubt vanished from the disciple's mind. What does this signify? That the conveying of spiritual teaching does not depend upon words. It is the life, the illumination, which counts. Such God-enlightened men, however, cannot easily be found; but even with such a teacher the knowledge of the Self cannot be gained unless the heart of the disciple is open and ready for the Truth. Hence Yama says both teacher and taught must be wonderful.

VIII

When taught by a man of inferior understanding, this (Self) cannot be truly known, even though frequently thought upon. There is no way (to know It) unless it is taught by another (a teacher who is Illumined), for it is subtler than the subtle and beyond argument.

IX

O dearest, This (the Self) cannot be attained by argument; It is truly known when taught by another (a wise teacher). O Nachiketas, thou hast reached It. Thou art fixed in Truth. May we ever find a questioner like thee.

Knowledge of the Atman or Self cannot be attained when it is taught by inferior men, that is, by those who themselves lack in real understanding of It and who therefore, having no definite conviction of their own, differ among themselves as to its nature and existence, regarding it variously. Only he who has been able to perceive the Self directly, through the unfoldment of his higher na-

ture, can proclaim what It actually is; and his words alone carry weight and bring illumination. It is too subtle to be reached by argument. This secret regarding the Hereafter cannot be known through reasoning or mere intellectual gymnastics. It is to be attained only in a state of consciousness where reason cannot reach. There are seekers and seekers after Truth. Some seek just to make their lives easier or to gain a little power. Others seek out of love for Truth itself. Such was Nachiketas.

X

I know that (worldly) treasure is transitory, for the unchangeable can never be obtained by things which are changeable. Hence the Nachiketas fire (sacrifice) has been performed by me with perishable things and I have attained the (apparently) eternal.

XI

O Nachiketas, thou hast seen the fulfilment of all desires, the foundation of the universe, the endless fruit of sacrificial rites, the other shore where there is no fear, that which is praiseworthy, the great and wide support, yet, being wise, thou hast renounced all with firm resolve.

The teacher, saying "I know that the imperishable cannot be attained by perishable objects", shows that no amount of observance of *Karma-Kanda,* i. e. of rituals and ceremonies, can enable one to attain that which is imperishable and eternal. The Nachiketas fire-sacrifice although it may bring results which seem eternal to mortals because of

their long duration, yet they too must come to an end and hence it cannot lead to the final goal. Then Yama praises Nachiketas because having been offered the fulfilment of all his desires, the knowledge of all heavens and heavenly pleasures, ("the foundation of the world, etc.") in short everything which tempts and bewilders ordinary mortals, he had yet renounced them all and had remained firm and fixed in Truth.

XII

The wise beholding, by means of the highest meditation on the Self, the Ancient One, who is difficult to perceive, who is lodged in the inmost recess, who is hidden in the cave of the heart, who dwells in the depth (of inner being) as God, he casts off joy and grief.

The eternal Self, the Atman, the real man, dwells in the cave of the heart of every mortal. He is called ancient because He is the origin and cause of all manifested life. He is very difficult to realize because of His subtlety; but when the mind is concentrated and turned within, then the mortal beholds the glory of the immortal Self and becomes immortal. That is the goal.

XIII

A mortal having heard and fully grasped this, and having realized (through discrimination) the subtle Self, rejoices, because he has obtained that which is the cause of (all true) joy. I think the abode (of Brahman or Truth) is open to Nachiketas.

The Scriptures give three stages in all spiritual attainment. The aspirant must first hear about the Truth from an enlightened teacher, next he must reflect upon what he has heard until he grasps it. Then by keeping his mind fixed on that, or, in other words, by the constant practice of discrimination and meditation he realizes it; and with realization comes the fulfilment of every desire, because it unites him with the source of all joy and wisdom. Having beheld this, a man learns that all sense pleasures are but fragmentary reflections of that one Supreme joy, which can be found in the true Self alone. Hence It is called the cause of all joy. Yama assures Nachiketas that there is no doubt of his realizing the Truth, because he has shown the highest discrimination as well as fixity of purpose. Therefore nothing can prevent his attainment.

XIV

Nachiketas said: That which thou seest, which is neither virtue nor vice, neither cause nor effect, neither past nor future (but beyond these), tell me That.

In reply to the words of praise spoken by Yama, the Ruler of Death, Nachiketas, the disciple, said: O Revered Teacher, if Thou art pleased with me and thinkest me worthy, then teach me that state of perfection beyond all these dualities of good and evil, pleasure and pain, action and reaction; beyond time, space and causation. These are all born of contact between senses and sense-objects, they are therefore with beginning and end, hence perishable.

I desire to know that which is beyond these, that which is undying and eternal, the essence of all being.

XV

Yama replied: That goal which all the Vedas glorify, which all austerities speak of (lead to), desiring which (people) practise Brahmacharya (life of continence, purity and service), that goal I tell thee briefly—it is OM. (AUM).

What name can man give to God? How can the Infinite be bound by any finite word? All that language can express must be finite, since it is itself finite. Yet it is very difficult for mortals to think or speak of anything without calling it by a definite name. Knowing this, the Sages gave to the Supreme the name A-U-M. What does it mean? It is that which stands behind all articulate sound, the root of all language. The first letter "A" is the mother-sound, being the natural sound given by every creature when the throat is opened, and no sound can be made without opening the throat. The last letter "M" is spoken by closing the lips, which terminates all articulation. As one carries the sound from the throat to the lips, it passes through the sound "U". These three sounds therefore cover the whole field of possible articulate sound. Their combination is called the *Akshara* or the imperishable word, the Sound-Brahman or the Word-God, because it is the ultimate name which can be given to the Supreme. Hence it must be the

word which was "in the beginning" and corresponds to the Logos of Christian theology. It is because of the all-embracing significance of this name that it is so universally used in the Vedic Scriptures to designate the Absolute or the Supreme.

XVI

This imperishable word is indeed Brahman. This Eternal Word is indeed the Supreme. He who knows this Eternal Word obtains whatever he desires.

He who through meditation on this sacred word as the symbol of the Absolute, grasps its full significance, he realizes the glory of God and obtains all desires; because God is the fulfilment of all desires.

XVII

This is the best Support, this is the Supreme Support; knowing this Support, one is glorified in the world of Brahman.

To know this Support or underlying Essence of all being means to know also one's own Divine nature and its eternal connection with the Brahman or the Supreme. Therefore, when the seeker realizes what God is, he also realizes that:—

XVIII

This Self is never born, nor does It die. It did not spring from anything, nor did anything spring from It. This Ancient One is unborn, eternal, everlasting. It is not slain even though the body is slain.

XIX

If the slayer thinks that he slays, or if the slain thinks that he is slain, both of these know not. For It slays not nor is It slain.

XX

The Self is subtler than the subtle, greater than the great; It dwells in the heart of each living being. He who is free from desire and free from grief, with mind and senses tranquil, beholds the glory of Atman (the true Self).

Although this Atman dwells in the heart of every living being, yet it is not seen by ordinary mortals because of Its subtlety. It cannot be perceived by the senses; it requires a finer spiritual sight. The heart must be pure and freed from every unworthy, selfish desire; the thought must be indrawn from all external objects; mind and body must be under control; then the whole being will be calm and tranquil and it becomes possible to perceive that effulgent Atman or Self. It is subtler than the subtle, because It is the invisible essence of every thing; and It is greater than the great because the underlying, sustaining power of the whole universe; that upon which all existence rests.

XXI

Though sitting, It travels far; though lying, It goes everywhere. Who else save me is fit to know that God, who is (both) joyful and joyless?

The Self is all-pervading, hence It is that which sits still, and that which travels, that which is active and that which is inactive. It is both station-

ary and moving and it is the basis of all forms of existence; therefore whatever exists in the universe, whether joy or joylessness, pleasure or pain, must spring from It. "He is in my heart; who is better able to make me know Him than I myself, since He is the very essence of my being?" Such should be the attitude of one who is seeking.

(To be Continued)

REPORTS

The public celebration of the birthday anniversary of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna took place at the Vedanta Centre of Boston on Thursday evening, March 5th. The Lecture Hall was crowded to the doors and the deepest interest was manifested in all that was told of the Great Teacher. Swami Paramananda, who delivered the principal address of the evening, said in brief: "Human beings love freedom above all else and whoever helps them to gain this freedom is always cherished. But while we find that among other nations the chief records are of great politicians, great reformers, great social or military leaders, in India, he who has succeeded in bringing spiritual light and freedom, whether king or peasant, receives the highest honor. Such was the one whose birth we are observing today. Although of humble Brahmin parents, illiterate and poor, he started a mighty current in India which is gradually bringing new life to the nation. I do not mean by this that he sought to destroy old India. No; he tried to revive the glory of the ancient land of the Aryans. He brought to India what India

needed. India has a wonderful literature, a wonderful philosophy and lofty religious Ideals, but what she needed was a living example, a living interpretation, and this he gave. He taught the people that their great spiritual Ideals were not mere theories handed down from the past; but actual living realities. He did not come in the garb of a brilliant scholar or leader; on the contrary he was always humble and meek. And his heart was so broad and compassionate that he never uttered a word of condemnation against any creature. He proclaimed universal tolerance not merely by words, but by his life and character. God is infinite, he said, and He has an infinite number of children. For these He has provided many different paths. Why then should we denounce anyone? If we have the right to follow our special path to God, why have not His other children the same right and privilege to follow each his own path or Ideal? His love was so great that although the doctors warned him that he could not teach so incessantly without breaking his physical constitution, he replied: "If I can save one soul, I will gladly give a hundred bodies and bear unlimited suffering". His message was not for India alone. To him this world was one great home, God was the Father and Mother of all, and all the children of the world belonged to one universal family, destined every one to reach the same ultimate Goal, whatever the creed or race or nationality. He passed away some years ago, but the current which he started, the power he set in motion, is still working. Gently, silently, like

the morning dew, which falls on the flowers and makes them burst forth into the fairest of blossoms, so Sri Ramakrishna lived and passed out, without making any effort to change any one or be recognized by anyone. But his influence has gradually spread until today in Calcutta alone between forty and fifty thousand people gather at the head monastery of the Order to do honor to his memory, while all over India earnest souls are celebrating this anniversary. His prayer was always: "Divine Mother take from me all desire for name and fame. I offer all unto Thee. Thou art All-in-All. I am only an instrument in Thy hands. Not I, not I; but Thou." Such a Soul could not fail to leave behind a power which must have a world-wide influence; for his message can be followed by any earnest heart, whether Christian, Mohammedan, Jew or Hindu."

The day was also observed by the Vedanta Societies in New York and San Francisco.

* * *

During the month of March at the Boston Vedanta Centre the Swami Paramananda conducted two services every Sunday, besides the usual weekly classes. On Sunday morning he gave a series of Talks on the Katha-Upanishad (Secret of Death) which were followed with the closest attention by a steadily increasing number. At the afternoon Service he delivered a special course of lectures on some of India's greatest religious Lights; Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sankara, Sri Ramanuja, Sri Gouranga.

During April the weekly classes and the Sunday morning Service will continue as before; but the meeting at 4 o'clock on Sunday afternoon will be discontinued and the usual Vesper Service at 5 will be resumed.

The latest report of the flood-relief work of the Ramakrishna Mission in India states that out of the four circles in which the Government has divided the afflicted Bhagabanpur Thana, two have been placed in charge of the Mission. In the Contai and Tumluk subdivisions the amount of rice distributed in the month was about 69,000, pounds. The Honorable P. C. Lyon, after inspecting the relief work carried on by the Mission at Midnapore made a personal offering of 50 rupees, and declared in his official report that the work of the Ramakrishna Mission was being conducted with such method and judgment that the public could be assured that their contributions would be utilized to the best advantage. In two of the flood swept districts, "where cold and disease are vying with each other to aggravate the distress," the Mission has also opened medical relief stations which are proving of the greatest benefit.

* * *

A new Ramakrishna Ashrama or Hospital has also been started recently at Dacca in East Bengal under the patronage of the Nabab of Dacca, who has given a building and a sum of money for the purpose.

* * *

SPECIAL NOTICE

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The Message of the East

MAY 1914

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. MAY, 1914 No. 5

One cannot divide the rights of the universe. To talk of "right" implies limitation. It is not "right" but "responsibility". Each is responsible for the evil anywhere in the world. No one can separate himself from his brother. All that unites with the universal is virtue. All that separates is sin. You are a part of the Infinite. This is your nature. Hence you are your brother's keeper.

The first end of life is knowledge; the second end of life is happiness. Knowledge and happiness lead to freedom. But not one can attain liberty until every being (ant or dog) has liberty. Not one can be happy until all are happy. When you hurt anyone you hurt yourself, for you and your brother are one. He is indeed a Yogi (saint) who sees himself in the whole universe and the whole universe in himself. Self-sacrifice, not self-assertion, is the law of the highest universe. The world is so evil because Jesus' teaching "Resist not evil" has never been tried. Selflessness alone will solve the problem. Religion comes only with intense self-sacrifice. Desire

nothing for yourself. Do all for others. This is to live and move and have your being in God.
—*Unpublished Notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda.*

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

The immortal can be reached only by continuous acts of kindliness and perfection is accomplished by compassion and charity. —*Buddha.*

Man is born for mutual assistance. You must live for another if you wish to live for yourself.
—*Seneca.*

The best days of a man's life are those in which he renders service. —*Abu't Tarif.*

These three are reckoned to constitute the highest way of the pious: A man must not offend any one, he must be charitable, and he must speak the truth always. Those great men of highest virtue who are kind on all occasions and who are filled with compassion, obtain the greatest contentment and ascend the highest path of virtue.
—*Mahabharata.*

Love every man as yourself; that is, do not wish him anything that you would not wish for yourself . . . . do not keep in your memory any word or deed he has done against you. . . and then you

will soon see what will come out of that golden rule into your life and heart. What peace! What absolute blessedness! You will be this day with Christ in Paradise. You will taste heaven upon earth. The kingdom of God is within you. He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. —*Father John of Cronstadt.*

Thou shalt not say, I will love the wise but I will hate the unwise. Thou shalt love all mankind.
—*Talmud.*

Of all noble qualities, loving compassion is the noblest. —*Laotze.*

DUTY AND SERVICE

Extract of Lecture by Swami Paramananda

Is there any common standard of duty? In studying the ethical laws of various peoples, we are led to believe that there cannot be any universal objective standard; but there is a subjective principle which underlies the moral codes of all nations. The outward form of duty changes according to our position in life. It can therefore never be defined by any fixed set of rules. That which might be a duty in one condition would not be under other circumstances. All objective duty is determined by a man's relation to his external environment, hence it must necessarily remain relative; but subjective duty concerns only man himself and his character. It has to do, not with his action, but with his mo-

tive; with a principle, not with its mode of application; therefore there can be an abstract law common to all mankind. It may be summed up thus: "That which makes a man forget his own little self for others and leads him towards his Ideal is his highest duty."

It is not possible, however, to reach this abstract subjective ideal without first following the path of immediate outer duties. We must begin by fulfilling the obligations which are nearest to us. First we must perform our duty towards our family, our community, our country; then as our heart grows in understanding and sympathy, we are gradually able to do our share of good to all living beings. But we cannot realize this great ideal and undertake the larger tasks of life until we have proved ourselves by ably performing the small ones at our hand; and no matter how insignificant or unpleasant these may seem, they are the only ones for us. As it is said in the Bhagavad-Gita: "Better one's own duty, though devoid of merit, than the duty of another well-performed. Better is death in following one's own duty; the duty of another is full of danger." Why? Because nothing can be gained by undertaking an alien duty. We must not forget that the purpose of life is evolution. All our present conditions and obligations are the result of our own past actions; and only as we meet them wisely, can we rise to higher conditions and be entrusted with greater responsibilities. We must show ourselves worthy in our present position, then when

we have earned them, greater things will be given to us. We may imagine that we could do better some other task than the one which stands before us, but if it were substituted for our present one, very soon we would find that we were not fitted for it.

In the preliminary stages of our spiritual development, we must faithfully pursue the path of duty prescribed by our life and conditions; then our nature will become so expanded that all feeling of compulsion will cease to exist and every task will seem to us a privilege. When in all our work we are actuated by love, not by a sense of obligation, then duty is transformed into service and we accomplish it spontaneously just for the joy we find in doing it. A sense of duty most often implies limitation, because it springs from a feeling of obligation; but in service we give freely. There is no calculation, no thought of coercion. The spirit of true service, however, never dawns in the heart without self-abnegation and non-attachment. If we would do for others, we must be willing to forget our own little self, our physical comforts, our individual happiness. Only as all our actions are based on the principle of working, not for results, but through love, do we learn to help others truly. A worthy lover of mankind is like a flower which gives its fragrance whether we place it on our head or trample it under our feet. His nature is to give without any regard for his own personal gain or loss.

The story is told of a Holy Man in India who, going one day to a well to drink, found a scorpion struggling in the water. The sight touched his loving heart and lifting the poor creature from the well, he pressed it against his breast to warm and revive it. But no sooner had the scorpion regained its strength than it stung him. The saint placed it gently on the ground and in a moment it fell back into the well. Forgetting that it had done him any injury, again he rescued it and held it against his heart, but the scorpion stung him as before. Still a third time he drew it from the water and gave it the same loving care, wholly unmindful of the harm done to himself. He had reached a state of consciousness where he had realized the ideal preached by Buddha and Christ of loving even his enemies, for all self-love had merged into the great love which embraces all living creatures.

The first quickening in the spiritual life is marked by the awakening of feeling for others. As we read in the Gita: "He who looks upon pleasure and pain everywhere with the same regard as when it is applied to himself, that one is highest"; because this signifies the broadening of the whole nature. As long as our interests remain confined within the circle of our little self, all struggle for higher attainment is in vain, for our position is like that of the man who pulls on his oars without lifting his anchor. That is why all the ethical and spiritual teachings of the world unanimously proclaim the necessity of cultivating selflessness

through the practice of charity and compassion. When we serve for the sake of serving, when we love for the joy of loving, when we act without selfish motive, we become ideal characters. Those who are sincere, pure-hearted, true lovers of their fellow men never hurt any one by thought, word or deed. According to the Vedic teaching: "Doing good to others is the only virtue, injuring another is the only vice". He who hurts no living creature by his thoughts, his words or his actions is indeed a saint and a true representative of religion, whether or not he ever enters a place of worship.

Every act of our life can be done in such a way as to uplift us or to drag us down. It is not what we do, but how we do it that determines the merit of each action. Therefore we must learn to live and work with humility, non-attachment, sympathy and selfless love. When all these are combined in our efforts to serve God and our fellow-beings, then alone we are serving truly. And such service is the highest aim of human life.

He who hates no creature and is friendly and compassionate to all, who is free from attachment and egotism and forgiving; he who is the same to friend and foe and also in honor and dishonor, such a devoted soul is dear to Me.

—*Bhagavad-Gita.*

THE LIFE OF BUDDHA

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh

Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East"
Continued from March number

Act IV. Scene I

Siddhartha or Buddha (*seated under a tree in the forest*) :—My head whirls; it may be that this body is about to fall. Still the Truth is unattained; the suffering of mankind has not been removed. But so long as life lingers in this body, I must go on searching for the Truth. The flower blossoms with fragrance in its heart and after scattering its fragrance, it withers. Has it any fear of death? Yon towering tree swaying its head in joy as if holding converse with the sky, it too, as I watch it, seems to have no fear of death. The tree shall be my teacher. Heat, cold, wind, rain—it has learned to endure them all; ever the same, never forgetful of its duty. Why then should I forget my task? Let me once more plunge in meditation. Having abandoned all attachment, why cling unto this life?

(*Heavenly maidens enter and sing*)

Lo, my vina, dearly beloved!
Who on the vina can music make?
He who loves it the strings can wake
To melody sweet, as nectar is sweet,
To hundred-fold beauty, to beauty complete.
But Oh! when slackened the strings grow mute.
Over-tightened and breaks the lute.

Strain not the tender strings lest they break.
Deeply he joys in the murmuring strings,
Deep in his heart the music sings
Of him who knoweth this secret well.
But whoso rudely the vina strains,
Alas, his vina silent remains,
Silent, silent remains.

(*As they sing, they disappear*)

Siddhartha:—Sweet music! The singers are my teachers. As thirsting after pleasure is poisonous, so also is torturing the flesh. By neither can one reach the Truth. I shall take the middle path. That is the eternal Dharma (law). If I do not preserve this body, how can I seek the highest? Attachment for the body must be given up; but preservation of the body is essential. I have lived in luxury, I have practised severe austerity, but neither has brought me the desired end. Now let me see what the middle path may bring.

(*He walks and seats himself beneath another tree. Sujata enters bearing a plate of rice and accompanied by her friend Purna.*)

Sujata (*to Purna*):—Look, dear! It is as if the forest god had come in human form to fulfill my desire. Who can that radiant person be seated under yonder tree in deepest meditation? Seven years ago I made a vow that if I obtained a husband after my heart's desire and bore a son, on full moon day year after year I would offer this dish of sweetened rice and milk. This desire has

been fulfilled. That is why perhaps this Deity has come in human form to receive my worship. (*To Siddhartha*) Lord! Accept my humble offering. Bless me that my husband and my son may abide in safety.

Siddhartha:—May your prayer be granted.

(*Sujata and Purna go out*)

* * *

(*Siddhartha enters from one side, the Shepherd from the other*)

Siddhartha:—Tell me, O traveller, whither art thou going in such haste? Wherefore is thy face so sad? Why dost thou not rest beneath the shadow of this tree, for see, thy brow and limbs are wet and weary. Alas! Stop, stop! Speak! Wherefore these tears streaming from thine eyes?

Shepherd:—Why didst thou call me back, Sire? "Stop, stop!" Wouldst thou give thy head for mine? I did not stop even to drink enough to quench my thirst.

Siddhartha:—Why, my friend? What has befallen thee?

Shepherd:—Dost thou not know the king's command? I am a poor fellow. I make my living by these goats. But I must give them all up to the king. If I can deliver them before nightfall, then all will be well. If not, my head must go. Look at the size of these goats—almost like buffalos! When all these are gone, how shall I make my living? That's what I am thinking.

Siddhartha:—But, my good man, what is thy offense?

Shepherd:—No offense except that a great sacrifice is to be performed in the king's house.

Siddhartha:—He will of course pay thee?

Shepherd:—Ha! Pay? If he saves my head! Dost thou know him—the kind of king he is? A king of robbers! If I do not bring the goats, he will burn my village. Without the sacrifice of one hundred thousand goats, his religious feast will not be complete.

Siddhartha:—One hundred thousand lives! Come, my good man; I shall restrain the king. He will not take thy goats.

Shepherd:—What country dost thou come from? Thou dost not know our king.

Siddhartha:—Thou needst have no fear. Come.

Shepherd:—Ah! Sire! Who art thou? Thy sweet words soothe my heart.

Scene II

The Temple of King Bimbasara. The Image of the Goddess Kali. King Bimbasara, his minister and two Brahmin priests.

Messenger (*entering*):—Your Majesty! A strange shepherd is approaching with a herd of goats. And, Oh! what a radiant being! All the people of the town, beholding his wondrous beauty, are following after him.

Priest:—Such a great sacrifice! Many people will be coming and going! Let us begin the sacrifice.

(*Siddhartha enters.*)

Siddhartha:—Hail to thee, King.

Bimbasara (*to himself*):—Who is this? (*to Siddhartha*) Who art thou?

Siddhartha:—I am a beggar.

Bimbasara:—Very good. Let the sacrifice be over, then thou shalt be given alms.

Siddhartha:—I will not receive alms after the earth has been soaked with sacrificial blood. Thou art performing a great sacrifice. Do not refuse a beggar.

Bimbasara:—Minister, tell the treasurer to give him a little gold.

Siddhartha:—My behest is to the king. What can the treasurer give me? I have not come for any other alms than this—grant unto me the lives of these poor animals which stand here ready for the sacrifice.

Bimbasara:—Art thou mad? I am performing this sacrifice that I may obtain a son. I see that thou are dressed like a *Sannyasi* (religious mendicant). Why then dost thou utter such unholy words? Thou art an ascetic, therefore I forgive thee. Had another come thus at this moment, I should have killed him. Go. Sit there quietly and watch the worship of the goddess.

Siddhartha:—Desiring a son, thou art worshipping the Mother of the universe. Why dost thou then kill myriads of creatures? Mother of the universe, all are her children, even the smallest insect. Behold! In mute appeal these goats are lifting up their heads. O King, if thou dost not show mercy

unto them, how canst thou obtain the mercy of the Lord? He who is cruel, the gods are cruel to him. O Lord of men! Why wouldst thou drench the earth by such cruel slaughter? The King's duty is to protect the weak. Weak are these goats. Alas! Alas! Devoid of speech! Else they would cry to thee in piteous tones: "We die. Save us, O Lord of men." King! Living beings, harming one another, sink in an ocean of dire misery. By doing injury no one can earn merit. Can one please God by killing? Sire, be assured of this—no greater sin is there in this world than harming any creature. O Ruler, thou hast no power to give life, why then dost thou take life? The pain of other hearts, try to feel it in thine own. Behold these speechless, helpless goats. They are as anxious for their lives as mortals. They feel the pain of the knife's thrust just as human beings feel it; but they know not how to voice their pain. To earn merit by killing such poor creatures is not possible. Thou art intelligent, realize this in thy heart. But if without sacrifice the goddess will not be appeased, then sacrifice me. For twelve years I have practised severe austerity. If thereby I have earned merit, that I give unto thee, O King, that thou mayst obtain a son. If thou art sonless because of sin which thou hast incurred, willingly I take that sin on me. Take my life, O King, and grant life to all these helpless goats. O Lord of men, this will bring thee blessing; thou shalt obtain a son and escape the crime of killing. Of my own free will

I lay my body on the altar for thy sacrifice, hence it can be no sin for thee. Grant, grant this prayer of an ascetic. O King, do not stain mother earth with blood. For selfish ends kill not countless creatures. Where is the slayer? Slay me for the King's sacrifice.

Bimbasara:—Great One! Ignorant am I. Forgive me by reason of thy virtue. Thy words of wisdom have unveiled my eyes and now I see that there is no greater sin than killing. Thou art the Teacher of the world. Give me shelter at thy feet. I have no more longing for a son. I desire no more a kingdom. I would leave my home and go with Thee to serve Thy feet. Who art Thou? Make Thyself known. I feel Thou art no common man. Do not conceal Thyself from me. O Holy One, make Thyself known.

Siddhartha:—Listen, O King. Beholding the misery of mankind, I have come out in quest of Truth. A king's only son and possessor of vast wealth, I left behind a wife who was as life itself to me. Bless me that my heart's desire may be fulfilled and that I may remove the misery of mankind. O King, mayst thou live in safety! I must go my way.

Bimbasara:—Lord! I shall follow Thee. If Thou dost forsake me, I shall die.

Siddhartha:—O King! Heed my word. Why wouldst thou give up thy kingdom? With love do thou protect thy subjects. If my life is fruitful, if I obtain the rare jewel (of Truth), I promise thee

I shall bring that jewel to thee. Behold, King, time is flying. I can stay no longer.

Bimbasara (*to his Minister*):—Spread throughout my kingdom the command that no one shall injure any creature. Distribute wealth from out my treasure house. There is no better way to please the Lord than this. My delusion has been destroyed by this Holy Person. Henceforth in my kingdom all sacrifice shall be performed without shedding blood.

REPORTS

Recent letters from India inform us that at the celebration of Sri Ramakrishna's Birthday Anniversary last March between 70 and 80 thousand people came to the head Monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission near Calcutta to do honor to the memory of the Great Teacher. Boats plied up and down the Ganges from 7.30 in the morning until long after sunset carrying the crowds and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed throughout the day. Differences of caste and creed were entirely forgotten and people from all walks in life mingled freely together.

From somewhat tardy reports from India of the celebration of the fifty-second Birthday Anniversary of Swami Vivekananda we also learn that more than 25,000 poor people were fed at the different Centres of the Ramakrishna Mission to honor the day. In the districts of the Flood Relief Work carried on by the Mission 3000 poor were given a

feast in one Centre and 1000 in another, besides a special feast for 200 children; while at Almora food and 100 blankets were distributed to the inmates of the local Leper Asylum. The Anniversary was observed in many new places; among these was Bombay, where two large meetings were held. There were also celebrations at Benares, Colombo, Rangoon and Singapore, in Tanjore and Madras, Mysore and the Punjab. In fact, there was scarcely a province of India where there was not something done to mark the day.

At the Monastery of the Mission in Bangalore, the brother of the Maharajah of Mysore was the chief speaker of the occasion. He delivered an eloquent address, saying in part: "We are living in an age of reason. Awakening India subjects her religion to this critical test and desires the eternal truths propounded in the Vedas to be given to her in their pristine purity. Such an establishment of *Dharma* (religion), based upon the eternal truths of the Vedas, has been given by Sri Ramakrishna. We have but to hear of his life to see what a comprehensive grasp of the eternal truths of religion he held, which made him realize God and the Kingdom of Heaven in each religion. If Sri Ramakrishna did this for the world, what has Swami Vivekananda done for it? He was the great apostle of this teaching to the world. The Swami advocated a practical Vedanta, a Vedanta making for a new National Spirit, a spirit of public service, wherein the subjective vision of the One should be trans-

formed into the objective service of the many. Therefore, while in the West one finds him uttering the philosophy of the Vedanta, urging the Western world to meditation, in the East one finds him urging the people to action, to cultivate the spirit of public service, the spirit of social unity and the spirit of social reform whose method is to be a growth from within. He said that our religion properly understood and practised was sound and unassailable and most conducive to human progress. He saw like Akbar, the great Mogul Emperor, no difficulty in Christians, Mussalmans and Hindus alike following their Ideal according to their traditions, historical growth and inherited inclinations; worshipping the same God, though under different names; and living side by side, striving for righteousness, purity and noble living under the same influence of high ideals and creating a new India. Inside the Hindu fold he removed every barrier separating caste and creed by proclaiming the common unity of the Vedic Ideals underlying the apparently divergent practices obtaining from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin. Every nerve-fibre of his being tingled with sympathy for the poor and down-trodden; and his large-hearted Soul overflowed with an all-consuming love for India, a renovated and rejuvenated India, which will purge itself of all its long-standing ills and stand out like a lion among the nations of the world, giving culture and religion to all lands, proclaiming humanity, fraternity and peace, and voic-

ing forth the power of divinity in humanity."

At Benares Prof. Shyamacharan Dey, at the close of an inspiring address on the life of Swami Vivekananda, paid the following tribute to the Ramakrishna Mission: "The service of the poor has always been placed by the Mission in the fore-front of its programme of work. To alleviate the suffering of the poor, Homes of Service or Hospitals have been established in various towns of India under the auspices of the Mission. An Orphanage and an Industrial School with an experimental farm attached to it have been established at Bhabda in the Murshidabad district. The Ramakrishna Mission has done yeoman's service in combating pestilence, famine, and the disasters wrought by earthquakes and floods. Its work has secured to it the approbation of the Government and the admiration and confidence of the public. The philanthropic work of the Mission has been increasing year after year, and he would be a bold man who could set a limit to its sphere of usefulness."

* * *

The Fourth Annual Report of the Sri Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Trichinopoly in Southern India contains a gratifying record of progress during the year 1913. The Society maintains a Reading Room of its own and arranges frequent public lectures on religious subjects. It has also started a free Sanskrit School, where instruction is given gratuitously by an able pundit.

Five festivals were celebrated through the year, at which 700 poor people were fed and 36 cripples were clothed. The Society is at present collecting funds to erect permanent headquarters.

We have received word from Palkonda in the Vizagapatam District, India, of the opening of a Poor House, built by the Sri Ramakrishna Tatwa Somaj, an energetic Society founded four years ago for the purpose of feeding and clothing the needy. The dedication exercises began with an imposing procession in which all the officials and leading citizens of the locality took part. At the meeting which followed a prominent government officer presided, and a brief history of the Association was given. At the present time its members undertake to feed weekly some 40 disabled poor and to supply them with proper clothes. Besides this they assemble together every evening to study and discuss the writings of Swami Vivekananda and other great religious teachers.

* * *

The work of the Ramakrishna Mission in Southern India is manifesting great activity. Under the energetic guidance of Swami Sharvananda, who has lately been placed in charge of the Monastery in Madras, six new Centres have recently been established—at Palghat, Calicut and other important points—and still others are soon to be started.

* * *

The Vedanta Centre of Boston hopes to move to its permanent headquarters, No. 1 Queensberry St., about the middle of May. There will be no interruption in the regular meetings, which will continue as usual throughout the month.

At the Sunday morning Services during April lectures were given on "Control of Body and Mind," "Life After Death", "Right Discrimination", "Value of Meditation". Easter Sunday was marked by an especially large attendance both in the morning and in the afternoon.

The following significant statement was made by Prof. Brown of Cambridge, England, in reply to the question why Christian Missions were not meeting with greater success in the East:

"The answer, to my mind, is as plain as the sun at mid-day. Western Christianity, save in the rarest cases is more Western than Christian, more racial than religious; and by dallying with doctrines plainly incompatible with the obvious meaning of its Founder's words, such as the theories of 'racial supremacy,' 'imperial destiny,' 'survival of the fittest,' and the like, grows steadily more, rather than less material. Did Christ belong to a dominant race, or even to a European or white race? . . . . . The dark-skinned races to whom the Christian missionaries go are not fools, and have no object in practising that curious self-deception wherewith so many excellent and well-meaning European and American Christians blind themselves to the obvious fact that they attach much more importance to race than to religion; they clearly see the inconsistency of those who, while professing to believe that the God they worship incarnated Himself in the form of an Asiatic man—for this is what it comes to—do nevertheless habitually and almost instinctively express, both in speech and action, contempt for the 'natives' of Asia."

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Swami Paramananda, known to the Madras public through his six years residence at the Ramakrishna Math here, and also as the author of various works, including a recent scholarly translation of the Bhagavad-Gita has just published a new book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness". It has the same dynamic ring as his earlier work. "The Path of Devotion," now in its third edition; and no one can read it without feeling a fresh stirring of courage and hope. . . . The English is remarkably clear, fluent and graceful. There are six chapters in all and each one is full of strength and inspiration both for the outer and the inner life. INDIAN REVIEW, Madras.

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Ligh shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

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THE PROBLEM UNIVERSAL

Lecture by Swami Saradananda

(Continued from January number)

"Verily, out of Bliss has this universe evolved, and being evolved it lives in Bliss and in Bliss does it go back and is absorbed, know Brahman to be Bliss." This is the conclusion of the Vedas. It follows from this that the knowledge and happiness that we find within ourselves are the conditioned manifestations of the Infinite Knowledge and Bliss. But because they are coming to us through the conditions of time, space and causation, we can see but little of that Infinite Knowledge and get only a partial and often distorted view of it.

Now let us come to the second question: How has it come out? Evolution forms the backbone of the Hindu Religion. Evolution is there through and through in the doctrines of the Vedas. The great philosopher and the father of Indian Pyschology, Kapila, discovered it, and in his system, which is called the Sankhya philosophy, we find the origin and the process of the growth of the universe explained through evolution. The process of cosmic evolution as known and taught by

the scientists of the day, agrees in main with that of the Sankhya system, though of course there is a want of detail in the latter. But there is a great difference between the scientists of the present day and the philosophers of India. The latter hold that if evolution is true, involution must also be equally true; and does not science tend to prove it through her own methods? No force can proceed in a direct line, but comes round and completes the circle, if it does not meet with any resistance on the way and is given sufficient time for it. All force comes round to the place from which it started; and is not that a proof of the fact that if evolution is true, involution must be true, too? If the world has come out of a Permanent Substance, it is sure to go back into It in the long run. This wave of evolution and involution is going on from all eternity, and there is no beginning of this process. How is it possible, you may ask, that there should be no beginning of creation? The question itself involves a big fallacy, for it implies that you want to know the beginning of the cause which has produced this universe; for if the cause is there from all eternity, the effect must have been synchronous with it; and if the effect had a real beginning, the cause had a beginning too. We all know that this universe is relative. We see all these motions and changes in everything here; indeed, constant change or motion is the law of it. Is not time itself a relative thing? What is time but a relative idea that comes to us through the changes that are going on in our minds;

so the idea of space, too, comes in that way relatively. No one can say that the ideas of time and space are absolute, however much they may be ingrained in us. Everyone knows and all philosophers agree that the little child has no idea of distance at all. If we place a red thing before it, it will first put its hand in its own eyes, and then farther and farther away as the idea of distance unfolds through experience from its struggles to get at the thing. Therefore, to find an answer to this question—at what time precisely creation began—we shall have to go beyond time and know that which is beyond time, hence absolute, and that is not possible for human reason.

What is God then? We have seen how the Hindu Sages emphatically declare that the Absolute Essence of Existence can be realized by man when he transcends the limits of time, space and causation. But so long as he is under these limitations, he cannot have a full view of It; he gets only a fragmentary glimpse; and this partial vision of the Absolute is what is to be understood by God. Let us illustrate this by an example. We see the sun above. Science tells us that the sun is many million times larger than the earth we inhabit, and yet we see the sun there as a bright little disc. Do we see the real sun or not? The answer will be that we do and do not. How is that possible? We see the real sun, but not as it really is, in shape, size and nature. Now let us imagine that we are travelling by a rail-

way train or a balloon towards the luminary. With every step in advance, our vision of the sun is changed; we see it larger and brighter. The light and the heat go on increasing as we come nearer to it; then finally when we reach our destination, we see the sun as it is. Therefore, what we saw from the earth was both true and untrue. It was the vision of the real sun, and it was not; that is, it was not the full view of the sun, but a partial one. So is the case with the idea of God. In whatever physical and mental plane man may be placed, he can never lose sight entirely of the vision of the Self, the Witness within, in Whom he is living and moving and having his being. Just as we are seeing the one real sun all the time, so we are feeling the existence of that Eternal, Unchangeable Ocean of Knowledge and Bliss within us, however much the vision may be dimmed or distorted by our surrounding conditions. Wherever we may have been placed through the process of evolution, we have been trying to approach it all the time.

As we evolve higher and higher, our ideas of God also go on developing and becoming greater and greater; and it is in this way that all the various ideas of God have come into existence in this world. Believe me, all these ideas of God are not false, neither are they all suited to one particular mind at the same time; but they will be found to suit different minds in their different stages of growth and development. Vedanta teaches that the idea of a

God immanent in nature and creation is but a partial manifestation of Him. This is Iswara, whose body is this wonderful universe, and whose mind is the sum total of all minds. Do we not find the same idea in the world of thought to-day in the West? Can that idea be possibly grasped by an African savage? Certainly not. He has his own ideas and becomes a fetichist or an animist or polytheist according to his own development. He worships his ancestors, and through the constant push of the ever-flowing current of evolution, his religious instinct expands, and he comes to recognize other gods presiding over the various functions of nature. Finally, as his mind develops and his perception grows keener, he comes to the ideas of monotheism and monism. Why does the Vedantist have not a single word of reproach or abuse for any idea of God, however crude it might be, though he himself worships the One Iswara immanent in nature? Because he is the greatest believer in God and knows that it will never do to force any one idea of the Deity on all, irrespective of individual development; and so he wants to keep intact all the different ideas of God grown through different ages and suited to different states of the human mind. He will never say that the highest idea of God will never be reached by even the lowest man on earth. Everyone is sure to come to it in time. Let him worship, therefore, according to his present beliefs. Let him have his idea and do you hold to your own. Let us all bear in mind that there

is an ever-guiding hand in this universe, a beneficent power which is leading each one of us higher and higher; so that, in the long run, no one will be kept back from the highest stage of development. All the higher ideas of God which have come to any one of us will be the property of all. They will all evolve from out their own real Self, which is the Deity Itself.

The principal point which the Vedantist urges is that all knowledge is within us. It can never be outside of us. But there are barriers which prevent its coming out; and what does education mean but the removal of these barriers? How could you make a child grasp an idea? Only by removing the obstructions that are in its way and the idea will come out and manifest itself. This has been the basis of the modern educational system. Examine the kindergarten method and the different systems which have been discovered lately, and you will find that this is the case. They are not trying to hammer into the child's brain any idea, but they are all the time teaching it the use of its own powers and the knowledge is coming out of itself. You can do nothing else but this. Therefore, it is very true that all knowledge and power are within and not without us. The only thing required is to build up our will to bring them out. They may be brought out by different means, but constant longing alone must be the condition of all these means. They can come out by controlling the mind and by the conservation of energy, which

is the one principle common to all the systems of Yoga. We all know the law of hydrostatics; that if there are eight holes in a bladder and the bladder is full of water, and if you stop seven of them, the water will come out through the remaining one with the combined force of eight. Yoga in a few words is nothing else but the stoppage of the flow of the mental energy through more than one desired channel. Earnest and heartfelt prayers, too, will bring the powers of the soul out. For what can be stronger than the prayers of a devoted mind?

Another point which the Vedantist wishes to urge on us is this—that man struggles not from error to truth, but that he has been proceeding all the time from lower to higher truths, and all these are like so many steps of the ladder of evolution by which he is rising up to the highest. The lower truths, like the lower steps, may not be necessary for one who has risen a good way, but they are unavoidably necessary for those who are still down below. Thus flows the course of evolution, and man rises by catching hold of truth after truth and ideal after ideal, till at last he reaches the end. We have no idea of absolute truth at present. Truth, as it appears to us, is relative; hence we find its gradations from lower to higher and from higher to the highest; and blessed is he who recognizes this fact. His toleration and sympathy and active help to others know no bounds. India alone of all places recognized this truth from pre-historic times, and it is also an historical fact that there

has not been a single religious persecution in this land of toleration. It is here that monism attained its highest stage; and from this land this sublime truth has been and still will be spread all round.

"He is the All and the Over-all. He is the relative and yet He far transcends the relative." The whole universe forms the body of God, the infinite mind is His mind, and in His absolute nature He is the essence of the soul of all beings. He is the God immanent in nature, working in and through all these physical and mental forces, and yet He transcends all. This is, in brief, the idea of God as conceived by the Vedantist. Now comes the idea of man. If man is a part of that Highest Self, that Absolute Being that forms the basis of this universe, what difference is there between God and man? The difference is this: God is almighty, the sum total of all minds forms His mind; whereas man has but a limited mind which forms, as it were, one single eddy in the infinite ocean of mind, and hence he knows but little, and his power is limited. But when he will recognize his real nature, he will be one with the Infinite Deity. The essence of all beings and the essence of God are one and the same. The difference is in the degree of manifestation. The Creator transcends all the limits of time, space and causation which bind the little mind of man. But man will attain to that absolute state as soon as he will feel himself one with Him. This has been proved again and again in the lives of all the great teachers of the different religions.

A beautiful illustration of man's thus gaining the God-consciousness comes in one of the Upanishads, of which I shall give you a free rendering. Two birds having beautiful plumage are sitting on this tree of life—the one above sitting majestic in its own glory and not caring to taste the sweet and bitter fruits of the tree; while the other down below is always tasting the sweet and bitter fruits thereof. As the lower one gets the bitter taste of certain fruits, it becomes disgusted and looks up at the bright vision above and proceeds towards it, overpowered by its glorious light. But the alluring fruits entice it again before it has proceeded far on its journey, and it goes on tasting the fruits as before. Again it gets the taste of a bitter fruit, and in its disgust looks up and is charmed by the sweet vision above. Again it gives up and proceeds on its way. Disgusted and charmed, forgetting and remembering, it thus draws nearer and nearer to the upper bird; when it is close enough, lo! the whole vision changes and it finds itself one with the upper bird. It sees itself glorious and effulgent and the lower bird appears to be but its own shadow. Thus in the two verses of the Upanishad is shown the process of development of the finite individuality of man into the Infinite Self of God —the Oneness, as it has been termed, with God.

The question arises: Is it not Pantheism, what we have been preaching? What if it is Pantheism, if by it I feel the existence of God nearer than by the so-called Theism or any other Ism? There are

different stages of Pantheism. There is one stage of Pantheism which is nothing else but materialism. It teaches that God has changed into this material universe, and everything that we find here is a part of God, and there is no other God except this manifested universe. This is not the Pantheism of the Vedanta. The Vedanta wants man to become identified with the Infinite Love or God and to make him forget his little self entirely. Is this Pantheism? The materialistic Pantheism is not at all a suitable name for the religion of the Vedanta; you might express it better by the word Hypertheism or Supertheism, or something higher than Theism. The God of the so-called Theism is outside this world. Vedanta leads us a step higher and proclaims the immanency of God in and through all this creation and process of evolution, and so we might better term it Hypertheism, Supertheism or Monism. Let us not cast truth away because it has been labelled with the bad name of Pantheism; but let us be humble votaries at the shrine of Truth, wherever it may be found, be it in the Vedas, or in the Bible of the Christians, or in the brilliant researches of Modern Science.

Of the four questions, we have considered the answers of two,—"Whence?" and "How?" The other two remain—"What?" and "Why?" What is this universe for? And the answer comes clear: To take each and every one to the highest point of evolution—that is the end of the universe. To evolve life and consciousness even in the lowest

particle and take it to the highest, the superconscious existence, where man will find no more barriers to his knowledge—barriers which his material body and mind are constantly manufacturing—that is the end of the universe. But why has the Creator projected this universe out of Himself? Necessity He has none, or if He has any, would it not mean a certain imperfection in Him? Nobody can answer this "Why." But this question, too, involves a fallacy. Man has been asking this "Why" from time immemorial. In old times, when his power of thought was immature, he had to satisfy himself by bringing out those crude theories of creation which are to be found in the mythologies of the world. Later on, when his power grew, he put the same question thus: How has the conditioned come from the unconditioned; or how has the unlimited become the limited? We have been forgetting over and over again that in order to find the answer to this we shall have to go beyond and transcend all relativity; because you will find it in the Absolute and nowhere else. Vedanta explains this question from two positions. The one is the standpoint of relativity and the other that of the Absolute entity or the standpoint of God Himself. From the standpoint of relativity there might be a necessity of Theology; but from the standpoint of God, the answer is that there is no universe in our sense of the word. And why? Because God finds Himself to be all these things and knows that He is yourself, myself and everybody else's self, but

knows them not as separate entities. He knows that He it is Himself alone who is manifesting and playing, and there is none else separate from Him, and therefore He cannot be said to be conscious of creation as a separate thing from Himself. Thus arises the doctrine the *Vivartavada* of the Vedanta, which later on, misunderstood and misinterpreted, gave birth to the crude illusory theory of the universe, as we find it in the translations of our Scriptures by Western scholars. The truth is, the Vedanta tries to give no explanation from the Absolute standpoint except that the world is a spontaneous outflow of the Deity, a play of love of the Infinite with Himself.

From the relative point of view there is every necessity of creation as we have seen before, and this relativity will remain true so long as there is this relative vision. The necessity of creation from the human standpoint is to lead man higher and higher till at length he brings out all the powers that are hidden within him, which all of us are going to do some day or other. Let me now conclude with a prayer from the Vedas: "May our mind and speech act in harmony with that Highest Truth. Do Thou, Oh Self-effulgent Light, reveal Thyself to us! May the senses bring and retain day and night the higher light which has been revealed through the Scriptures. I shall speak what I know to be true, and may that truth protect and perfect him who speaks as well as him who hears. Peace, Peace, Peace!"

THE KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART II.

(Continued from April number)

XXII.

The wise who knows the Self seated bodiless within perishable bodies, great and all-pervading, does not grieve.

When a wise man, through the practice of discrimination has seen clearly the distinction between body and soul, he knows that his true Self is not the body, though it dwells in the body. Thus being fixed on the Indestructible, All-pervading Brahman and no longer bound by bodily limitations, he surmounts all fear of death or loss, and is not moved even by the greatest sorrow.

XXIII.

This Self cannot be attained by (mere) study of the Scriptures, nor by intellectual perception, nor by frequent hearing (of It); He whom the Self chooses, by him alone is It attained. To him the Self reveals Its true nature.

We may imagine that by much study we can find out God; but gathering information does not mean acquiring knowledge. Merely hearing constantly about a thing and gaining an intellectual comprehension of it, does not mean attaining true knowledge of it. Knowledge only comes through direct perception and direct perception of God is possible for those alone who are pure in heart and

spiritually awakened. Although he is alike to all beings and His mercy is on all, yet the impure and worldly-minded do not get the blessing, because they do not know how to open their heart to it. He who longs for God, him the Lord chooses and to him alone can He reveal His true nature.

XXIV.

He who has not turned away from evil conduct, whose senses are uncontrolled, who is not tranquil, whose mind is not at rest, he can never attain this Atman (Self) even by knowledge.

Yama, having first described what the Atman is, now tells us how to attain It. A man must try to subdue his lower nature and gain control over the body and senses. He must conquer the impure, selfish desires which now disturb the serenity of his mind, that it may grow calm and peaceful. In other words, he must live the life and develop all spiritual qualities, otherwise mere intellectual knowledge cannot help him.

XXV.

Who then can know where is this mighty Self? He (that Self) to whom the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas are but food and death itself a condiment.

This text proclaims the glory and majesty of the Supreme. The *Brahmanas* stand for spiritual strength, the *Kshatriyas* for physical strength, yet both are overpowered by His mightiness. Life and death alike are food for Him. As the light of the great Sun swallows up all the lesser lights of the

universe, similarly all worlds are lost in the effulgence of that Eternal, Omnipresent Being.

Part III.

I.

There are two who enjoy the fruits of their good deeds in the world, having entered into the cave of the heart, seated (there) on the highest summit. The knowers of Brahman (Truth) call them shadow and light. So also (they are called) by householders who perform five fire sacrifices or three Nachiketas fire sacrifices.

Here "the two" signify the higher Self and the lower self, dwelling in the innermost cave of the heart. The Seers of Truth (wise men) as well as householders, who perform fire sacrifices (or follow the path of rituals and outer forms) with the hope of enjoying the fruits of their good deeds, both proclaim that, in their nature, the Higher Self is like the light and the lower self like its reflection. When the Truth shines clearly in the heart of the knower, then he surmounts his apparent duality and becomes convinced that there is but One, and that all outer manifestations are nothing but reflections or projections of that One.

II.

May we be able to learn that Nachiketas fire sacrifice which is a bridge for those who perform sacrifice. May we also know the One Who is the highest imperishable Brahman (Truth) for those who desire to cross over to the other shore which is beyond fear.

The significance of this text is: May we acquire the knowledge of Brahman (the Supreme) in both manifested and unmanifested form. He is manifested as the Lord of Sacrifice for those who follow *Karma-Kanda* or the path of sacrifice and grants all their desires. He is also the unmanifested, eternal, universal Supreme Being, for those who, desiring to go beyond all duality and limitation, follow *Jnana-Kanda* or the path of wisdom. This "other shore" is said to be beyond fear, because being the realm of immortality, disease, death and all that which mortals fear, ceases to exist there.

III.

Know the Atman or Self as the Lord of the chariot, and the body as the chariot. Know also the intellect to be the driver and mind the reins.

IV.

The senses are called the horses; the objects which they perceive are the roads; when the Self, the senses and mind are united, that the wise call the enjoyer.

In the third chapter Yama, the Teacher, defines what part of our being dies and what part is deathless, what is mortal and what is immortal. But the *Atman,* the Higher Self, Brahman or the Absolute Truth, is so entirely beyond human conception that it is impossible to give a direct definition of it. How can we define or even think of that Subtle Self, the Real Existence of this universe, which is unthinkable, limitless, formless, infinite? We may

be told about It again and again, yet we cannot picture It. Only through similies can some idea of It be conveyed. That is the reason why all the great Teachers of the world have given out Truth in the form of parables. So here the Ruler of Death represents the *Atman* or Self as the Lord or owner of this chariot of the body. The intellect or discriminative faculty is the driver, who controls these wild horses of the senses by holding firmly the reins of the mind. The roads over which these horses travel are made up of all the external objects which attract or repel the senses: thus the sense of smelling follows the path of sweet odors; the sense of seeing, the way of beautiful sights; so each sense, unless restrained by the discriminative faculty, seeks to go out towards its special objects. When the*Atman* is combined with mind and senses it is called the intelligent enjoyer, because it is the one who wills, feels, perceives, does everything.

V.

He who is without discrimination and whose mind is always uncontrolled, his senses are unmanageable like the vicious horses of a driver.

VI.

But he who is full of discrimination and whose mind is always controlled, his senses are manageable like the good horses of a driver.

The man whose intellect is not discriminative and who fails to distinguish right from wrong, the real from the unreal, is carried away by his sense

passions and desires just as a driver is carried away by vicious horses, over which he has lost control. But he who clearly distinguishes what is good from what is merely pleasant, and controls all his outgoing forces from running after apparent momentary pleasures, his senses obey and serve him as good horses obey their driver.

VII.

He who does not possess discrimination, whose mind is uncontrolled and always impure, he does not reach that goal, but falls again into Samsara (realm of birth and death).

VIII.

But he who possesses right discrimination, whose mind is under control and always pure, he reaches that goal from which he is not born again.

That man who comes under the sway of the senses and of fleshly desires is unclean, because it is by the thought of spirit, of *Atman* or the Higher Self, that one remains clean and pure. In India, whenever anyone touches a dead body, he considers himself polluted and must bathe. The significance of this is that life is the purifier, and whenever one comes in contact with a thing that is dead and perishable, he becomes unclean. In the same way, when our mind dwells on matter and material things which decay and die, it becomes unclean. So long as our thoughts are identified with such perishable objects, desire for them will drag us down again and again to this plane of birth and rebirth. Until we discover what we are, what our

aim is, why and for what we exist, we rise and fall on the waves of Karma, which we ourselves create. But he whose mind is in subjection, whose understanding is unfolded, whose thoughts are always pure, he reaches that goal from which there is no return.

IX.

The man who has a discriminative intellect as the driver, and a controlled mind for the reins, reaches the end of the journey, the highest place of Vishnu (the All-pervading and Unchangeable One).

A driver must first have a knowledge of the road—which is the right way and which the wrong; this is discrimination. Then he must understand how to control his horses and how to handle the reins. If the horses are uncontrolled, vicious, and unbroken, they may drag him into the ditch and kill him. But he who has firm control over his horses, he drives safely everywhere. Similarly, in this great journey of life, what we need above all else is a discriminative intellect and a subjugated mind, not a mind which wanders and acts under impulse, but a mind which is balanced, well-subdued by our higher discriminative faculty, and senses which are disciplined like well-trained horses. When all our forces thus work in unity and harmony, then alone can we hope to reach the goal of life, that highest abode of the Changeless One, of Brahman (the Absolute Truth).

(To be continued)

DEDICATION SERVICE

With the dedication of its new home on the evening of May 21st, the Vedanta Centre of Boston entered upon a new period in its activities. Five hundred invitations had been issued for the occasion, and although the seating capacity was much greater than in the old quarters, every available space was filled even beyond the entrance doors, and some went away discouraged. Palms and flowers, the offerings of loving friends, stood everywhere, and while the guests were being seated the organ was played continuously. The Swami entered soon after eight and opened the exercises with prayer and chanting, after which he delivered the following address of welcome:

"In the Name of the Supreme Being of the Universe, Whom we invoke by different names, I welcome all friends and guests to this Home, which is dedicated to that All-loving, Universal Spirit. This altar stands here to represent a non-sectarian conception of Deity and the ideal of love, of universal sympathy and tolerance which is so wonderfully set forth in the teachings of the great Vedic Seers, who lived in India ages ago. The Sanskrit inscription on the altar means 'Truth or God is one, men call Him by various names.' This is quoted from one of the most ancient Scriptures of the Indo-Aryans. God, the Supreme Being, the Father and Mother of all creatures, is One. Although we perceive Him under differing manifestations, He is ever the same, Limitless and Unchangeable. That Unfathomable, That Infinite One, Whose children we are, cannot be labelled by any one name or represented by any one form. All religions, all forms of worship are but different paths leading to Him.

"This chapel is not established as a substitute for Christian creeds; that would be contrary to the

spirit of the Vedas and Vedanta, for the keynote of the teaching is: 'By whatsoever path men seek Me, even so do I reach them. All men are struggling along paths which ultimately lead to Me.' (Bhagavad Gita.) True religion never works by destructive methods. This we specially observe in the study of Indian History. Nowhere do we find any effort to proselytize. Although Buddhistic missionaries went out from India to foreign countries to spread the Truth, they never tried to force others to give up their own religion; their idea was to lend a helping hand, to serve as servants of the Lord and to love all men as brothers. My hearty desire and prayer to the God of the Universe is that we may realize this lofty spirit of religion and radiate that spirit in our life; for religion is not a matter of doctrine or dogma, it is a question of living.

"Holding the lofty ideal of unity, harmony and all-embracing love, we now dedicate this altar as a glowing symbol of the Divine, to remind us of our relation to God and our duty to our fellow-men, that we may live and grow in spirit as worthy children of the Supreme. God is the God of all; all are His children, and His light shines upon all. Every human being possesses Godhood intrinsically; and the religion of Vedanta seeks to show each one how to manifest this potential Divinity, so that he may realize fullness of life, and thus bring help and blessing to all who come near him.

"We have with us this evening many distinguished guests, and therefore I do not wish to take too much time. I now have the pleasure of presenting one who is already known to most of you, our honored guest, Prof. Lanman."

Professor Lanman (Professor of Sanskrit at Harvard University) then spoke briefly but impressively of the need of a broader point of view

in the West. Referring once more to the inscription on the altar, he reminded his listeners that the true God can be but one, although each may give to Him his own name; and he said that from various sources he had heard how truly this universal ideal was upheld in the work of the Vedanta Centre. Prof. Lanman closed by repeating in Sanskrit the verse from the Kena-Upanishad: "It is known by him by whom it is not known (because beyond thought). He by whom It is thought, knows It not. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know."

The Swami then called upon Mrs. Adams, who made a deep impression by the sincerity and earnestness of her words. "I am glad," she said, "of this opportunity to tell a little of what the Vedanta Centre has been to me, and why I see fit to supplement attendance at my own inherited church with visits to this other branch of Oriental worship. For of course, all religions have had their birth in the Orient and all at their source have recognized the unity that some of us are in danger of forgetting. Our Christian Leader laid special emphasis on the oneness of all life, and it is for no lack of appreciation of His teaching or of gratitude for its service to me that I come to this Centre. Indeed I should not find Vedanta so helpful if the teachers of it did not reverence Jesus of Nazareth and quote not only from His sayings but from those of all spiritual leaders. I avail myself of the help of the Vedanta teaching as well as of Christian preaching because I need all the help I can get. These are strenuous times for everyone, but I think the strain on women is most severe. We American women are going through a period of readjustment, a transition stage that demands all we have and more, too. Our little crafts are not yet adjusted to the rough weather

which we will meet for the next ten years, and some of us may go on the rocks if we do not carry a spare anchor to throw out to windward.

"Perhaps I can suggest why I regard the Vedanta Centre as one of my spare anchors. Suppose one were riding on a noisy, crowded elevated train, being jolted and jerked here and there, whirled past houses and poles until one grows dizzy, twitched around curves until one has lost all sense of direction, then supposing the train stops with a jar, and one gets out and walks and walks till one reaches the foot of a hill. One climbs the hill and finally at the top stands under the tall pines and looks back at the busy city below. Does one not draw a deep breath of relief and relaxation? Such is my feeling when after a busy day I come into the quiet home of Vedanta. From that pine-crowned hill I look on the miniature trains threading their way through the streets and on the tiny chimneys sending out little clouds of smoke, and it all takes its place as good in the great scheme of things. Even the dots of human beings jostling and pushing each other in their hurry, appear to me just what they are—God's children seeking hither and yon for unity; and, to quote Mrs. Browning: 'I smiled to think God's greatness flows around our incompleteness; 'round our restlessness, His Rest.' A great peace and a great love enter my heart then, not the peace of inactivity or a love to be sentimentalized over and tucked away, but a peace and love to be used in the workaday world. I go back to my everyday duties with renewed love for man, but also—and what is more important to us Westerners—with renewed confidence in the wisdom and goodness of the One Doer. I go not as a soldier to fight an enemy, but as an agent of love working with others for that unification which is, I believe, consciously

or unconsciously the desire at the root of every heart. Such a high hill of refuge have I often found in the teaching so simply and lovingly given out at the Vedanta Centre. Is it any wonder that many busy workers slip away to it occasionally and think of it always with gratitude and joy?"

Professor Adams (of Harvard) followed and told with friendly directness and simplicity of the pleasure he always felt in coming to the Centre because of the spirit of loving-kindness he never failed to find there. He had been brought up, he said, in a non-sectarian atmosphere. It was his father's custom to go now to one church, now to another; and, when asked why he did this, he invariably replied that it was because he gained some special benefit from each one. After such early training, Professor Adams continued, it was easy for him to appreciate the broad note of tolerance which sounded through all the Swami's teaching, and he regretted that his busy life kept him from coming to the Centre as frequently as he would wish.

Mr. Arthur Burnham, introduced as one of the oldest friends of the work, was the next speaker: "Something over twenty years ago," he began, "our interest in the Orient was aroused by the testimony of the Rev. Phillips Brooks to the good life and the wise teachings of the Eastern peoples. He said, 'I have recently returned from a visit to the Orient. What I saw there of the people—their simple trustfulness and desire to be helpful to their fellowmen—convinced me that we must remodel and reconstruct our philosophy and our religion, so as to act in harmony with the Oriental thought and life.' This led me to watch with interest the birth and growth of the Vedanta under the guidance and care of Swami Paramananda during four years past; and tonight it gives me great pleasure to be present

at the opening of this fine chapel as a new Vedanta Centre which—located in the Fenway—is well adapted to its work.

Sister Devamata then gave a brief account of the Vedanta work both in India and America. She told something of the beauty and lofty simplicity of the life of the Founder of the present movement, Sri Ramakrishna, and showed how from the quiet Temple on the Ganges near Calcutta, where He passed His days, there had radiated a power of spiritual renewal and practical reconstruction, which was gradually changing the face of all India and extending its influence even to the West. She passed in rapid review the many hospitals, schools, monasteries and Reading-Rooms, the Orphanage, Industrial School, training farm and various branches of Relief work carried on by the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, of which the Vedanta Centres in this country form a part; and explained, that as telegraphy, although it had dispensed with wires, must still have receiving stations, so these Centres were established to transmit and make definite the currents of sympathy and truer understanding, which must pass between East and West before the world could live out a new chapter in the history of its civilization. The inception of the Boston Centre dated from 1909, when Swami Paramananda, coming to Boston on a visit, decided to remain and teach here. During the first year Sunday lectures were given in a public hall and numerous classes were arranged by interested students both in the city and in the suburbs. A winter in Washington, made necessary by the Swami's health, and the starting of a Centre there interrupted the course of the Boston work, which, however, was resumed in April, 1910, in St. Botolph St., where the Centre found excellent quarters. For four years Services and Classes were

held there steadily. The Swami, during this interval, delivered lectures in various European cities, but during his absence the meetings continued. The field of the Centre's usefulness, it was shown, was not confined to the work of the lecture hall and class room; for through its publication department it was covering a much vaster area. Within three years it had published some 10,000 books and pamphlets and put into circulation one-half that number. It had also started a monthly periodical which was receiving recognition from 140 of the leading libraries of the country as well as from many individual readers in various parts of the world.

The Swami, in his closing remarks, emphasized the fact that the tributes just paid belonged not to him but to all the workers who by their faithful and devoted service had made the Centre what it was. He thanked the speakers for their many expressions of friendly appreciation and goodwill; and he also extended his hearty thanks to all those who had had a share in the making of the new home, first of all to the architect and then to the workmen for the loving interest they had shown in carrying out their tasks. He then called upon all to join him in a silent prayer for the welfare of the work, after which he chanted the benediction.

The guests were then invited to partake of refreshments, chief among which being a Hindu dish of sweetened rice prepared by the Swami himself. Everyone expressed warm admiration for the new home and for the spirit of harmony which pervaded the dedication service. Many lingered on, reluctant to end what had been for all the workers an evening of deep gratification, and midnight was approaching when the last guests left the house.

* * *

The new home of the Vedanta Centre of Boston is situated on the edge of the Fenway, overlooking

the winding waterways of this serpentine park with its picturesque bridges and abundant shrubbery. The house, standing between two corners, has a free outlook to the east, south and west, with the longest frontage (95 ft.) to the south. The Centre has its entrance at No. 1 Queensberry St. It contains an entrance hall and office, a library, a public chapel, a Shrine or private chapel, and the living quarters for the Swami and men workers. The decoration of the two chapels was designed by Mr. Ralph Flint, an artist of rare gifts as well as a devoted member of the work, and their beauty has called forth loud praise from all sides. The beams of the vaulted ceiling and the high wainscoating in the Shrine are of dark oak with walls of dull gold, forming a fitting background for the altar, also of oak, delicately carved with touches of gold, and a reredos in three panels divided by slender columns, carved and finished in antique gold, with a lotus and leaves resting on the arch of each panel and in relief on the central panel the Vedic Symbol of the Supreme and Absolute Being, OM (the symbol for that which in Christian Theology is known as the Logos or Word).

The public chapel, where the Services and classes are held, has a lower wainscoating and woodwork also of dark oak, with walls of a warm grey tone. A platform extends across the inner end, having on one side high double doors leading to the Shrine, which remain open at the Sunday Services. On the other side is the entrance for the Swami, whose chair stands to the left of the altar, which is raised on a second step and is of simpler design than that of the inner chapel, having a low reredos capped by gilded lotus buds, and across the front the Sanskrit text *Ekam Sat Vipra Bahuddha Vadanti* (Truth is one, men call It by various names). On the altar stand two ancient temple candlesticks of great

beauty, the gift of one of the members. Two feet in height, they represent lotuses, the stems and leaves in bronze, the lotus buds and bases in dull-toned cloisonnee. An incense burner of like design stands between. Above the altar is a large symbol, which is declared to be Mr. Flint's crowning achievement, being wholly executed by himself. It consists of a round panel, 2 feet 6 inches in diameter with a narrow carved border edging the concentric circles of lotus petals in relief and crossed by fine gilded rays; at the center, in high relief, a large OM of burnished gold. The background is so wonderfully layed over with silver and colored that it looks like rich enamel work. Behind it hangs an ancient piece of embroidery.

The organ is built into a niche on the left wall and across the entire end of the chapel are panelled oak doors, 10 feet high, which fold back on themselves in such a way as to make the Library and Chapel practically one when greater space is needed. The woodwork and walls of the Library are like those of the chapel. Along one side are book-cases over which hangs a copy of Andrea del Sarto's "Ascension of the Virgin," by Mr. Flint. On the other wall is a large open fireplace and a broad triple window. The Vedanta Community House, where the Sisters and Women Workers live, has its entrance round the corner at 41 Audubon Road.

The first Sunday Service at the new House brought out a large attendance. The Swami spoke on "The Mission of Vedanta," giving a clear and convincing exposition of the fundamental principles of the teaching. His subject the following Sunday was "The Secret of Work." On Friday, the 29th of May, he was also one of the speakers at the annual convention of the Free Religious Association.

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VOL. III JULY, 1914 No. 7

Why do we come again and again under the sway of ignorance? Because we have desires. We want something, and want always means imperfection, a lack. When our whole being is filled, complete, then we have no want. When our hunger is satisfied, even if all the food in the world is put before us, we say: "No, I do not want anything more." In the same way, when we have once realized, we cannot fall again under the dominion of ignorance. It is direct contact with Truth, direct perception, which makes our life complete, which enables us to have conviction and transcend all the limitations of ignorance. Only he who knows, who has seen, who has had experience, only his mind is under control; for when we have once perceived the Truth, naturally we do not fall under the sway of untruth. Once we have known the glory of our Higher Self, we cannot yield ourselves to that which is low or unclean. Knowledge is therefore the greatest power, because it enables us to conquer all weakness, all imperfection. He whose mind dwells constantly on the thought of spirit, he is ever fresh, ever pure,

nothing can pollute him. Our heart is tied to those things which attract us; and when we are attracted by that Luminous Being Who is the source of our existence, when we surrender ourselves to Him, when we are ready to serve Him alone, then we know what the Self is, what God is, what Truth is. That knowledge brings the power to destroy all delusion and freedom is attained.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

As the troubled surface of rolling water does not reflect the full moon properly, but in broken images; so the mind that is disturbed by worldly desires and passions does not fully reflect the light of God. —*Sri Ramakrishna.*

Thought is best when the mind is gathered into herself and none of these things trouble her—neither sounds, nor sights, nor pain, nor any pleasure, when she has as little as possible to do with the body, and has no bodily sense or feeling, but is aspiring after true being. —*Socrates.*

Within every man's thought is a higher thought, within the character he exhibits today, a higher character. The youth puts off the illusions of the child, the man puts off the ignorance and tumultuous passions of youth; proceeding thence puts off the egotism of manhood, and becomes at last a public and universal soul. He is rising to greater heights, but also rising to realities; the outer relations and circumstances dying out, he entering

deeper into God, God into him, until the last garment of egotism falls, and he is with God—shares the will and the immensity of the First Cause.

—*Emerson.*

The Light Divine within is obscured in most people. It is like a lamp in a cask of iron, no gleam of light can shine through. Gradually by purity and unselfishness we can make the obscuring medium less and less dense, until at last it becomes as transparent as glass.

—*Swami Vivekananda.*

All that has form, sound, and color may be classed under the head "thing". Man differs so much from the rest and stands at the head of all things, simply because the latter are but what they appear and nothing more. But man can attain to formlessness and vanquish death. And with that which is in possession of the eternal, how can mere things compare? —*Chuang Tsu.*

Grief touches not him who is understanding, who has won illumination and is free from envy, self-controlled, and master of his senses. The wise man should hold fast to this illumination and keep watch over his thoughts. . . He should guard himself from all desires. When a man draws inwards the desires from all sides, as the tortoise gathers in its limbs, he shall behold the light of the Self as his Self in himself. —*Mahabharata.*

The highest wisdom of Greece was to know ourselves, the highest wisdom of India was to know our Self. —*Max Muller.*

THE TRUE SELF OF MAN

Lecture by Swami Ramakrishnananda

When all the desires that live in the mind are given up, then the man is said to be of steady wisdom. And at that time he lives perfectly satisfied within himself. Desires reside in the mind and not in the soul; so Sri Krishna says that when a man gives up the desires that live in the mind he attains wisdom. The mind is always restless, restless because of these desires. When it gets rid of all desires, then alone the Self can be realized. The mind has been compared to the surface of a lake. If the surface is disturbed by waves and ripples, the trees and clouds and other objects are imperfectly reflected; but if the surface is calm and clear, then every object is distinctly mirrored on it. Similarly when the surface of the mind is calm and clear, the Self is perfectly reflected. You stand beside a lake. If the waters are stirred by the wind, you do not see your true image—it is distorted and broken in outline. In the same way, if the mind is ruffled, it gives only a false and vague picture of the Self. When, however, all desires have left it, when it becomes calm, the true Self will be clearly seen and you will know your own glory. At that time you will see that you cannot die, cannot be overpowered by ignorance; that you are naturally *Satchitanandam*—eternally existent, all-knowing and blissful. Desires cannot exist in the Self, for it is full and complete. Desire means want. We are hungry because we need

food; we are thirsty because we want water. But the Self needs nothing, so it is wantless and therefore has no desire.

What is mind? Mind is one with me, but it is not I. Mind is the root of all the senses. The senses and organs of action are only able to work through the mind. It is the instrument by the help of which the Soul is able to gather up all experiences, is able to think and will and feel. This is the function of mind. If we analyze our desires, we shall find that they are all in the mind. Desires are of two kinds,—desires to avoid and desires to acquire. A man desires to avoid what does not harmonize with his mind, and to acquire that which does harmonize. Then all pleasurable and painful experiences come from the mind. Without the mind there could be no desire, because the mind brings the Self in contact with the world. Desire always implies an object. It is a transitive verb. A man always desires something and something which is to be found in the world. So all desires arise, not in the Soul, but in the world and in the mind.

So long as a man cannot separate himself from his body and mind, so long as he does not know the art of withdrawing himself from these, he will have to be restless and to suffer; for his desires will increase more and more as he satisfies them. By satisfaction of desires no man has ever been able to quench them. The more he yields to them, the more they will burn him. So only one who

knows the secret of separating himself from mind and body and thus getting rid of all desire, can be called a truly wise man. It is our daily experience that when we fall asleep, at that moment we go away from body and mind; we forget who we are, who our father is, where we live. But are we disassociated from all that belongs to us in the world? How is it? We are still in the body. We have not left it; yet we do not see or hear. The body is like a very big building. If the owner sleeps near the gate, he hears the least cry; but if he is in a distant corner, he does not hear unless the call is very loud. So when a man sleeps soundly, he goes far from the gateways of the senses; he also goes far from the inner gateway of the mind, and if you want him you must give a loud call. Yet he is always there. He has not left this house of the body. Thus we learn from sleep that soul is distinct from body and mind. When the man sleeps he does not die. He has only gone far inside himself, beyond the senses, even beyond the mind, because if he were still in mind he would remember, feel and think. If we analyze a man in sleep, we can say that he is not in the legs, he is not in the arms, not in the brain or in the senses. Yet he must be somewhere inside. It is said that he is in the heart; and the brain, the muscles, the whole organism is still under his command. When he leaves the body, all action ceases. If the brain is injured, the man may live for some time in a demented condition;

but if the heart is injured even a little, the life stops at once, because it is the centre of life.

If desires are in the mind and not in the soul, the soul is wantless, calm and perfect. Because it is perfect, it must be full, complete. Every one longs to be perfect and complete. Who of us does not wish to be rich? Why? Because we think that we shall be free from want. But ask a rich man if he has wants. You will find that he has many. The richer the man, the more wants he has and the poorer he is, because want means poverty. So when you find that wealth brings more wants, you say, "This is not the path"; and you try some other. In this way, you learn at last that perfection is nowhere outside. You are the perfect being. Perfection is within you. That is the reason you could not find it outside yourself.

But who is it that is searching? Who is this "I"? Is it the "I" who hungers, thirsts, who has so many imperfections in it? Who is this "I"? And who is that "I" who is full and perfect? Man wants to be happy, but this want is not in the Self, because It is happiness itself. The ordinary man wants to be wise; but there is no such want in the Self, because It is wisdom itself. Hence this "I" who hungers and thirsts cannot be the Self. But the great ones say, "Thou art That". What do they mean? How can this weak man, who is a Hindu or a Christian, who needs food and drink, who suffers and enjoys, how can he be that Perfect One? Yet the Vedas say this "I" is

That. Do the Vedas commit a blunder? No; we must not misunderstand their meaning. They do not mean that this weak, forlorn, ephemeral being known as Mr. So-and-So is that perfect, infinite One. A Hindu may have committed a murder and in order to escape he disguises himself as a foreigner; but he is caught and brought up before the court. He is not dressed like the man who committed the murder, he has not the same name, and there are many other differences. But the detective sees that the cut of the features, the height, the manner, resemble those of the murderer, so he overlooks the dissimilarities and dwells on the points of similarity, and by this means he is able to find out that this is the man who committed the murder. We must do in the same way. Of course the finite cannot resemble the infinite. Here I am garbed in finite dress, God is garbed in an infinite dress; so we must throw out the dress and dwell on points of resemblance. I am conscious and He is conscious. I am distinguished from the universe around me because I have the power to know; therefore I differ more from the universe than from Him, because I am conscious. Overlooking the dissimilarity in dress therefore, I see that we are alike in being conscious; hence we must be one in consciousness, because there is only one consciousness.

Can a beautiful dead body, in which a man or woman lived a few hours ago, can it see or hear? No. Why? Because it is not conscious. So con-

sciousness is different from seeing and hearing. It is the basis of all sense-perception. Consciousness enables me to see and hear; and this power of consciousness in me is the same as the power of consciousness in you. Sights may be many, sounds may be many, but the consciousness which enables us to see and hear cannot be differentiated. It is always the same, just as gold cannot be distinguished from gold. Wherever there is consciousness, there will be united action. That is the nature of consciousness. Consciousness is that power, with the help of which the eyes are able to see, the ears to hear, the tongue to taste; not any special eyes or ears or tongue, but all eyes and ears and tongues throughout the universe. Hence if you know one part of consciousness, you know all. But the desires which arise from sights, sounds, taste, touch, have nothing to do with consciousness.

The moment I shall be deprived of this consciousness I shall fall down dead. The instant it leaves me, I shall cease to live. I only live because I am conscious. But as Mr. So-and-So I am not always conscious. When I fall asleep, I forget completely whether I am a Brahmin or a non-Brahmin; so at that time this Mr. So-and-So has gone to sleep. But there is undoubtedly an inner consciousness that does not sleep, because when we wake up, we remember that we have existed before. And remembering means that while we were asleep we were experiencing what

we are now remembering. Memory is based upon past experience; so if we remember that we have been asleep, we must have experienced sleep. Who is this that experiences? It is not this outer self, who thinks itself a Brahmin or non-Brahmin, a man or a woman, old or young, because at that time the sleeper did not know what his form or condition was. But he remembers that he has been asleep. That which remembers is not this "I", but that consciousness which is above this formful condition. It is that universal, formless consciousness, which is one with the infinite, universal consciousness.

In this way we must reason and understand that when the Vedas say "I am That", they do not mean this ephemeral self is That—not the part which is a Hindu, because in the next life this same one may be a Christian. This is not That. But behind this fleeting, ephemeral self is a permanent Self, which is one without a second. The ocean is one. On the surface innumerable waves and ripples and bubbles play, but beneath them lies one vast body of water. Similarly there may be many ripples of consciousness, many bubbles, many waves of consciousness; but take away these ripples, waves and bubbles, and you will find one changeless consciousness. What is this ripple, wave, bubble side of me? This little self, this Mr. So-and-So, this Brahmin. But take away these and I am one calm, universal, eternal Self. Beyond all these that Self abides. On this eternal

Self rise the bubbles of ephemeral existence; but beyond dwells the indestructible, unchangeable One.

Where can rest be found so long as the eternal wind of desire is blowing, stirring up froth and bubbles and waves on the surface of the mind? Whoever will seek to find rest, peace, calmness, in this ever-changing world is a mad-man. If you want to realize perfection, it is somewhere else. There are no ripples or bubbles in your eternal Self. God, the all-wise, all-perfect Being has been described as consciousness; He is not dead, lifeless matter. Consciousness must be searched in consciousness, just as you must seek darkness in darknes, light in light. If therefore you want to realize the all-conscious Being, if you want to find your Beloved, you must search in your consciousness. If you wish to realize God, you must go deeper and deeper within. Only there will you find Him. Blessed is the man who has learned this secret! Inside this self of mine is the True Self to be found. Not outside. It is foolishness to search for Him elsewhere than in consciousness. You must seek being in being, life in life. This is the temple of God. You must take the suggestion from the outer temples and search for God in the innermost shrine. Wise men of the past realized this and built these outer Temples to show man how he must go from enclosure to enclosure of his organism, until in the innermost shrine he will find God seated. But to reach that shrine you

must pass beyond all the outer courts.

Suppose there is a wall with many things hanging on it. If you give up the wall, then you will have to give up everything on it. This body is like such a wall. But the moment you are able to give it up—that is, give up all attachment to it —you will give up all that is resting or hanging on it. Now what are the things on this wall? These two eyes are the two nails on which all forms are hanging; these two ears are the nails on which all sounds are hanging; this tongue is the nail on which all tastes are hanging; and so with all the sense organs and organs of action. Therefore to give up the body means giving up all these. To give up the mind means to give up memory or the record of past experience,—that is you will give up one small family, one country, name, one special caste or creed. This is how at last the man sees nothing but his Self. The moment that he gives up body and mind, he will also give up the world. When body, mind and world are given up, what is there? The One Eternal Self.

Have you lost something? No, you have lost nothing. Yes; you have lost all worries, troubles, anxieties. And what have you gained? You have realized all that you have been so long searching for. You have realized happiness. You have realized peace. You have realized power. You have realized freedom. You have gained all the things for which you have been struggling from time

without beginning. So your fruitless attempts through all your races of many lives, attempts which have been like those of a man journeying to touch the horizon or to find a mirage, have now borne fruit. You have touched the horizon. You wanted to be all-powerful; here you are all-powerful. You wanted to be calm and peaceful; here is calmness and peace for you. You wanted to know all, and you have become all-knowing. Thus you have got all that for which you have been struggling.

When a man has thus realized that ignorance has nothing to do with him, that misfortune has nothing to do with him; when he has realized his true nature and knows that he is all-perfect, all-powerful, that misery or ignorance has no power to approach him; then nothing can touch his purity, his perfection, and wherever he goes he is happy. Then he does not talk much. Why do we talk? We talk to learn. But he has nothing to learn, so he has no need to talk, and he therefore becomes a *muni* or silent one. If he talks at all, he says a few words merely to teach and help others. Nothing will ever be able to ruffle his mind. He may have to drudge under a hard master, or he may be placed on a splendid throne, but he remains unmoved, because he knows that compared to that Light this sun is but a flickering flame, compared to that Bliss these fleeting pleasures are as foolishness. Just as a farthing has no attraction for a millionaire, to him it is as nothing, so the things

of this world are as nothing to such a man; for he has found within himself an inexhaustible treasure, the treasure of eternal life, of infinite knowledge and unending bliss.

INDRA AND VIROCHANA

Story from the Chandogya Upanishad

Indra, the head of the Devas (those who dwell in the heavenly realm) and Virochana, the ruler of the Asuras (those who dwell on the middle plane, the plane of this world) went to Prajapati, the Lord of the Universe, and said: "Revered Sir, you have declared, so we have heard, that 'the Self is free from sin, free from old age, free from death and grief, from thirst and hunger. He who has searched out that Self and understands It, obtains all worlds and all desires.' We desire to know that Self." Prajapati replied; "Look at your Self in a pan of water and whatever you do not understand of your Self, come and tell me". They did as he instructed them and when he asked, "What did you see?" they said: "We see a picture of ourselves even to the hair and nails." "After you have washed and put on your best clothes, look again into the water pan". And when again he asked them "What do you see?" they answered: "Just as we are, well adorned with our best clothes and clean, thus we are both there". Then Prajapati said: "That is the Self, the immortal, the fearless. Thou art That." They both

went away satisfied in heart; but the Lord, looking after them as they departed, said: "They go away without having perceived and known their true Self; and whoever follows this doctrine, will perish."

Virochana, content, began to preach: "The body alone is to be served and worshipped; health, wealth, happiness and worldly success are the measure and aim of life". But Indra, questioning within himself, turned back and approaching Prajapati once more with fuel in his hand, said: "Sire, the body cannot be the Self because it dies". Prajapati, perceiving that he had discerned the real nature of the body, led him one step further inward, to the mind, saying: "He who moves about happy in dreams is the Self." Once more Indra set out satisfied in heart. But on the way this doubt assailed him: "Although the one who dreams may not be blind when the body is blind, or lame when the body is lame, yet he feels pain and sheds tears. This cannot be that Self which is beyond grief, old age and death". So again he returned and asked counsel of Prajapati, who seeing that he had learned the true and shifting nature of the mind, led him further inward to the ego or the undifferentiated sense of "I", saying: "When a man being asleep, reposing and at perfect rest, sees no dreams, that is the Self, the immortal, the fearless". Indra once again returned homeward, satisfied in heart, but before he had reached the Devas, he saw this difficulty: "In truth he that is in perfect rest does not know that he is I, nor does he know anything

that exists. He is gone to utter annihilation. This cannot be the deathless Self". So he came back and served and waited until his mind, through patient service and eager searching, had been so purified that he could perceive the Self. Then Prajapati declared to him:

"This body is mortal and always held by death. It is the abode of that Self which is immortal and without body. When in the body, the Self by thinking 'I am the body', is held by pleasure and pain; but when he knows himself as different and separate from the body, then neither pleasure nor pain can touch him. Like as a horse attached to a cart, so is the spirit attached to this body. He who thinks: 'Let me smell this', he is the Self, the nose is the instrument of smelling. He who thinks: 'Let me speak this', he is the Self, the tongue is the instrument of speaking. He who thinks: 'Let me hear this', he is the Self, the ear is the instrument of hearing. He who says: 'Let me think this', he is the Self, the mind is his divine eye. He, the Self, seeing these inner pleasures, which to others are hidden like a buried treasure, through His divine eye, the mind, rejoices. He who knows that true Self and understands It, transcends all worlds and obtains the fulfilment of all desires."

SOUL AND GOD

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

Each soul is a circle. The centre is where the body is, and the activity is manifested there. You are omnipresent, though you have the conscious-

ness of being concentrated in only one point. That point has taken up particles of matter, and formed them into a machine to express itself. That through which it expresses itself is called the body. You are everywhere. When one body or machine fails you, the centre moves on and takes other particles of matter, finer or grosser, and works through them. Soul is a circle whose circumference is nowhere (limitless), but whose centre is in some body. Death is but a change of centre. Here is man. And what is God? God is a circle with circumference nowhere and centre everywhere. Every point in that circle is living, conscious, active, and equally working. With our limited souls, only one point is conscious, and that point moves forward and backward. When we can get out of the limited centre of body, we shall realize God, our true Self.

A tremendous stream is flowing towards the ocean, carrying little bits of paper and straw hither and thither on it. They may struggle to go back, but in the long run, they must flow down to the ocean. So you and I and all Nature are like these little straws carried in mad currents towards that ocean of Life, perfection and God. We may struggle to go back, or float against the current and play all sorts of pranks, but in the long run we must go and join this great ocean of Life and Bliss. . . If we are inseparable from God, have we no individuality? Oh, yes: that is God. Our individuality is God. This is not individuality you have now; you are coming towards

that. Individuality means what cannot be divided. How can you call this individuality? One hour you are thinking one way, and the next hour another way, and two hours after, another way. Individuality is that which changes not, beyond all things, changeless. It would be tremendously dangerous for this state to remain in eternity, because then the thief would always remain a thief, and the blackguard a blackguard. If a baby died, he would have to remain a baby. The real individuality is that which never changes, and will never change; and that is the God within us.

THE RAMAKRISHNA MISSION

Although for many years the Ramakrishna Mission has been steadily and silently covering the face of India with charitable and educational institutions, it has only now issued a first Annual Report, and one cannot read of the splendid work it has already accomplished without feeling a glow of satisfaction. The name Ramakrishna Mission was first given to an Association started in May 1897 by Swami Vivekananda for the purpose of effecting a closer coöperation between the monastic and lay disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Its chief objects are: "To impart and promote the study of the Vedanta and its principles as propounded by Sri Ramakrishna and practically illustrated by his own life, and of comparative theology in its widest form. To promote the study of the arts, sciences and industries. To train teachers in all branches of knowledge above mentioned and en-

able them to reach the masses. To carry on educational work among the masses. To establish, maintain, carry on and assist schools, colleges, orphanages, workshops, laboratories, hospitals, dispensaries, houses for the infirm, the invalid and afflicted, famine-relief works, and other educational and charitable works and institutions of a like nature".

How nobly it is fulfilling these objects is shown in the records of the present Report. The first hospital was established at Benares in 1900 in a house rented at 5 Rupees (about $1.65) a month. It now has its own quarters consisting of an "out-door Dispensary with Office and Library, six general wards, three wards for infectious diseases, a kitchen, four bath-rooms, a morgue, fifteen sanitary latrines and six sewers", the whole surrounded by a high compound wall. A similar institution was established at Kankhal in the Himalayas by Swami Kaliyanananda, a disciple of Swami Vivekananda, who during a pilgrimage to Hardwar could not resist the loving impulse to relieve the suffering he met with on every side. The work began in June 1901 in rented huts with a few phials of medicine and the Swami as doctor, nurse, and general manager. In 1903 money was donated to purchase land and in 1905 two buildings were erected. A third one has now been added. Another hospital was started at Brindavan in January 1907, and in 1910 an out-door Dispensary was organized at Allahabad. In the three regular hospi-

tals mentioned, from the time of the founding of the first at Benares fourteen years ago, 216,565 patients have been cared for. Among these some were picked up by the roadside and carried to the hospital for treatment, others were nursed and provided with medicines and food in their own homes; for the method is not merely to care for those who knock at the gates of the hospital, but to search through house and street for hidden cases of suffering and distress.

One of the most interesting and useful of the Mission's institutions is the Ramakrishna Orphanage in Moorshidabad (Bengal). It was started in 1897, when Swami Akhandananda, wandering through a famine-stricken region trying to relieve the terrible suffering, found himself with two orphaned boys in his charge. A gentleman offered the three wanderers a shelter in his own house, then a rich lady Zemindar, or landowner, donated a building. Other starving orphaned children joined the Swami and so the new home began. Now the average number of boys on the roll is 75. At first only primary education and manual training were given; but gradually the course of instruction has been raised and the technical and industrial side emphasized in order to prepare the boys to be self-supporting artisans; and such good workmen have been turned out that many have won first-class certificates at public exhibitions. The general scope of the work has also broadened, until now, besides providing parental care and proper

training for destitute children in the rural districts, it has a regular department of Relief Work to "combat disease and misery in every form", by giving medical aid, nursing and shelter. It conducts a farm to train the boys in modern agricultural methods, and it is striving to enlarge its educational work so as to include all the arts and industries both for boys and girls. A large plot of land has been secured and the Swami is at present collecting funds to erect the necessary buildings.

Among the other permanent educational Centres are the Ramakrishna Students Home at Madras, established in 1905 for the purpose of assuring proper education to the sons of poor widows or other deserving boys; and the Girls' School at Calcutta begun by Sister Nivedita in 1899 and now carried on by Sister Christine (both devoted Western workers), assisted by a corps of young Hindu girls who have been prepared by them as teachers.

A branch of the work which especially illustrates the Mission's policy to unite East and West in all its undertakings and methods, is the Ashrama or Peace Retreat at Mayavati in the Himalayas. It was established in March 1899 by Swami Vivekananda with the help of Capt. and Mrs. Sevier, two devoted English disciples, who, having purchased a large tract of land, established themselves on it, and with the coöperation of Swami Swarupananda and other members of the Mission, dedicated their entire energy to the building up of a strong Centre. Capt. Sevier has since passed away, but Mrs.

Sevier still continues her faithful service. Here, 6800 feet above the sea level and 63 miles away from any railroad, a most active and useful work has been developed. It issues an English Monthly which ranks as one of the best organs of the Mission; while among its various publications stands a memorial edition of Swami Vivekananda's complete works in seven volumes, and a remarkable record in three volumes of his Life by both his Eastern and Western disciples. The final volumes in both cases are still to appear. The Ashrama also conducts a free Dispensary and does much to better the condition of the poor villagers on the surrounding hill-sides.

It is impossible to deal in detail with the numerous Relief Works which the Mission has carried on since 1897; but the report tells of extensive activities during ten different famines in various parts of India, and similar efforts to relieve distress caused by flood, plague, earthquake, fire and land-slides. In some cases a whole district has been put under its protection and care, the Government itself seeking its coöperation. There are also many smaller charitable undertakings which it is impossible to pass in review, as, for example, Swami Somananda's excellent work in the prisons at Bangalore, undertaken at the request of the Mysore Government. The chief foreign Centres mentioned in the Report are The Vedanta Societies of New York and San Francisco and the Vedanta Centres of Boston and Washington.

As the soul and life-breath of these multifarious institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission stands the Ramakrishna Math or Religious Order, with Monasteries at Calcutta, Madras, Mayavati, Benares, Allahabad and Bangalore, all of them directed by the main house of the Order at Belur on the Ganges a few miles above Calcutta, and each the centre of a net-work of smaller religious or charitable bodies working under their guidance. "There is a good deal of confusion in the minds of many", the Report reads, "as to the precise relation that monasticism bears to all the work that the Ramakrishna Mission means to take up. This confusion mainly arises from a tenacious notion that Renunciation and Service are conflicting ideals. . . . . Renunciation does not mean the negation or avoidance of activity. It means rather a growing selflessness in one's motive. . . Temporary abstention from distracting activities may be necessary in many cases just for the sake of gathering sufficient power to concentrate effort and keep out selfishness from the motive, but it cannot and need not be a general rule for spiritual aspirants. Rather it is desirable and necessary for them to have some noble field of activity where they can under proper guidance practise selflessness in motive. It is such a field of activity that the Ramakrishna Mission strives to provide through its many Institutions of Service". The Mission is a collateral and dependent development of the Math or Ramakrishna Order of Sanyasins (Monks). The two stand like "twin Institutions" to embody respectively the dominant Vedic ideals of Renunciation and Service. The Monastic Order is a complete organization by

itself, but when it coöperates and associates with its lay members and the general public in its various charitable and philanthropic undertakings, it becomes the Ramakrishna Mission.

No special section of the present Report is devoted to the sisters belonging to the Mission, but its pages contain sufficient record of the various branches of work conducted by them to show how definite and useful a place they occupy in the Mission's work.

* * *

The work of the Vedanta Centre of Boston has received a new and encouraging impetus since it moved to its permanent headquarters. The attendance at the Services has increased and a more active interest is manifest among the members. The Swami conducted all the meetings during the first half of June, and his two Sunday lectures on the "Power of Thought" and "Final Emancipation" were followed by an unusually large number. On Thursday evening, June 11th, he gave a dinner to 40 of the members and friends of the Centre, himself preparing all the dishes served; and on June 16th he sailed for Europe to resume his work there. He will probably be absent until the end of September. During this interval the meetings will be carried on by Sister Devamata. There will be the usual Sunday Services at 11 A. M. and 5 P. M. and the week-day classes on Tuesday and Thursday. The Sisters and Women-workers will also be at home in the Community House on every Saturday afternoon between 4 and 6 to all friends of the work. Already these informal receptions, which will continue throughout the year, have proved a valuable new feature and will undoubtedly do much to strengthen the feeling of fellowship in the Centre.

BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. AUGUST, 1914 No. 8

Adopt adequate means for the end you seek to attain. You cannot get butter by crying yourself hoarse, saying "There is butter in the milk." If you wish to make butter, turn the milk into curds and churn it well and then you will get butter. So if you long to see God, practise spiritual *Sadham* (devotional exercises); and then you will see Him. What is the good of merely crying "O God, O God"?

A thief enters a dark room and feels one by one the various articles therein. He lays his hand first on a table and, saying "Not this", passes on. He comes in contact with some other object—a chair, perhaps—and again saying "Not this", he continues his search; until, leaving behind article after article, he lays his hand on the box containing the treasure. Then he exclaims "It is here", and his search ends. Such is the search after God.

If a single dive into the sea does not bring to you the pearl, do not conclude that the sea is without pearls. Dive again and again and you will surely be rewarded in the end. So if your first attempt to see God proves fruitless, do not lose

heart. Persevere in the attempt and you are sure to obtain the Divine Grace at last.

—*From the Teachings of Sri Ramakrishna.*

THE SEARCH AFTER TRUTH.

Class Talk by Swami Paramananda.

It has been declared that without knowing the Truth all study of the Scriptures, all bodily efforts are in vain; and when one has known Truth, all study of books is useless. A man may have studied and collected many facts, but that does not mean that he has knowledge. He may be able to talk about these facts and repeat them, but they are not really his, until he has perceived the Truth which underlies them; and when he has known That, he has no need of these. Those who seek Truth must remember that it is not necessary to read many books. Often it happens that because we have gathered a certain amount of information, we take the position of knowers and try to instruct others; but we do not really know and we only delude ourselves and those whom we try to teach.

There is no such danger, however, when we have a genuine thirst after Truth. Many talk about it and assume a thirst for it, but very few really desire to know. Therefore the Lord says in the Gita: "Among thousands of human beings, scarcely one strives for perfection; and among the thousands of faithful strivers after perfection, scarcely one knows Me in truth." Why is this?

Because, in the first place, there are very few who seek Truth for the sake of itself. We see people who have not the slightest real desire for higher things, but when they meet with sorrow, perhaps their mind gets a little turning towards God; then when their grief is passed, it falls back. Again, among those who do strive, very few have the perseverance to persist to the end. Those, however, who really strive and persevere, they are sure to succeed.

Sri Ramakrishna tells the story of two peasants, one a farmer by birth, the other a merchant, who, failing in his business, had taken up farming. He tilled the soil like the other, but the first year it did not rain, and, discouraged, he returned to his trade; while the born farmer went to his field just the same every day, although for twelve years there was continuous drought. Similarly, there are born devotees. They cannot help loving Truth; and no matter how great the difficulties in their way, they go on and on until they realize it. This does not mean, however, that if we are not born with such tendencies, we cannot attain Truth. What one has been able to accomplish, all can accomplish. The genuine seekers are those who find for themselves methods for spiritual realization, not those who merely get by heart the sayings and teachings of others. They make their own sayings and teachings. Those who only write commentaries on books do not create, but those who discover Truth for themselves, they have the power to create. We

cannot create until we know things for ourselves.

This knowledge, however, does not come, until we have intense desire for it in our hearts. Only when we beg to be allowed to see, then alone God takes us in and gives us the vision of Himself. It was when Arjuna implored the Lord, saying; "If Thou thinkest me able (worthy) to see that (Godly Form), then show me Thine Infinite Self", that He revealed Himself. "But with these eyes of thine" the Lord declared, "thou canst not see Me, therefore I give thee Divine Sight". That Divine Sight comes to each one of us when we have really searched, and sincere searching is sure to bring it. Every one, however, is not fit to receive the Truth. Therefore we must prepare ourselves. We all want to be great, we all want to have power, we all want to enjoy freedom, but these will not come to us until we know the great Cosmic Power that stands behind this universe. In order to know That, in order to be in accord with That, we have to purify ourselves. First we must understand all the forces which manifest through us and make our senses, mind and body act. This body can be used for our highest happiness, for our greatest good. The forces which work through it, if properly directed, can make us godly and a blessing to others. And these same forces can also make us hideous. For this reason has it been said that heaven and hell are within ourselves.

The wise declare that it is foolish for man to talk of higher problems until he has dealt with

his own small limitations. We only deserve higher things, when we have proved ourselves worthy of the things already in our possession. Therefore they teach us to make the best use of the forces now at our command. They say: "Never show yourself weak," "Never let anything govern you." And what is the greatest source of strength in life? Purity. One who practises purity even in mere bodily cleanliness, finds he cannot go below a certain plane. We have formed certain habits and we think we have not the power to overcome them and that makes us feel helpless; but those who know say that we have the power to overcome everything. Everything can be conquered by strength. In one of the Upanishads it is asked: "Who can attain Self-knowledge?" And the answer is: "He who has a body that is strong, a mind and will that are firm, and a heart that is spotless". For others it is difficult. If we follow one road and expect results which are to be attained only along another road, we make ourselves ridiculous. So if we live one kind of life and expect to get the spiritual blessing which comes only from a different kind of life, we delude ourselves.

There are two things necessary to practise in our daily living, if we would gain the vision of Truth. These are self-control and purity—purity of action, purity of thought and purity of word. The nature of purity is to illumine; while impure acts or impure thoughts cloud the mind and we do not see anything clearly. Without self-control, also,

nothing can be accomplished. Whenever we are practising a lofty ideal, we may feel very much exalted by it; but unless we can control our mind and senses, this exaltation will go; we cannot hold it. Whenever our emotions are not controlled, it robs us of all our power and dignity. What is the best way to acquire self-control? If we have a fixed Ideal in our mind, it is very easy to practise control by beginning to think of That. Or if a wave of anger rises, we can set a contrary wave in motion and that will overcome the wave of anger. We must always try to bring a counteracting influence in the mind. But the main thing is to be watchful. Anger, impatience, hatred, all these are like thieves. Thieves never enter a house where there is a light. They go only where they are sure that every one is asleep. So these thieves of anger, lust, hatred only enter our hearts when we are asleep. Therefore we must always remain awake.

Through purity and self-control we gain tranquility and the tranquil mind soon becomes firmly established in Truth. Purity implies concentration, for purity means singleness. A substance is pure only when it is unmixed. A pure heart is a heart that is unflinching, that is single in its purpose. A pure mind is one that has become one-pointed. Whenever a mind is controlled by a fixed object, it is concentrated and that mind alone is pure. With such a mind only can we behold Truth. The most necessary thing, therefore, is to purify ourselves, and the first two steps in Yoga (the

science of spiritual development) teach us that this is accomplished by the practice of non-killing, truthfulness, cleanliness, non-stealing, continence, by contentment, mortification, study of the Scriptures and self-surrender to God. These are essential. Just as when we wish to visit a holy place, we naturally feel that we cannot go there without washing and making ourselves clean; similarly, when we take up the spiritual life, we must feel the same need to practise cleanliness both in our outer and our inner life. When we do not keep ourselves and our surroundings clean, we catch disease; so just for the sake of our physical health we must keep the body clean. In the same way, we must observe both external and internal cleanliness for the sake of our spiritual health. We must also be contented, for contentment will keep the mind clean.

Then comes mortification. This is not really the correct word. What is meant is subduing, breaking in the horses of the senses, so that they will not jump here and there and try to get away from us. When this is practised, the senses become calm and friendly. They no longer try to find our weak moments and subdue us. Non-killing is not injuring any living being. When we practise this, our heart grows gentle, full of love and compassion, and we can feel for others. It also naturally leads one to become a vegetarian, yet non-killing does not merely mean being a vegetarian, not taking life. It means not thinking an

unkind thought, not speaking an unkind word; and if we faithfully practise this, we shall find that the mind will become illumined. Truthfulness is being genuine and truthful in every act, every thought, every word; and through this our words will gain such power that they must fulfill themselves. Study of Holy Books is also very helpful.

Even a little practice of these preparatory steps will give us courage to go on. Until we have practised, we cannot help being sceptical and we ask, what is the use of these things? When we have practised, we see the use and we gain confidence. But our faith and our trust in Truth increase only according to the nourishment we give to our spiritual nature. There are two different natures in us which are like two different bodies. The physical body can be nourished by food and exercise, but that does not mean that we are growing stronger; for if we always nourish this flesh and try to sustain our physical nature only, then the other nature grows weaker and weaker, because it receives no nourishment. The food which we get through sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell, only sustains the body and the spiritual man becomes less and less living. When one nature is fostered exclusively, the other dies. But a balance can be maintained. Both can be fostered. The teaching of Yoga always gives us this wonderful lesson,—to acquire balance. Our heart, our mind, our intellect and our body must be kept in perfect balance, then everything will become possible. Nor

is it necessary to retire from the world to do this. No. The Great Seers tell us that just where we are, if we use all the forces God has given us, we shall cross over the whole ocean of ignorance and attain the Highest Truth.

Live a new life. Let not the surface of your heart be disturbed by the thought of your imperfections. Keep your Ideal there; little by little that will purify you and your imperfections will drop off. When things on the spiritual plane become a reality to you, then nothing will be able to shake your faith. So, practise devotion; have faith; whatever you do, do it with whole heart and soul and you will surely gain the Truth.

So long as a man clingeth unto the elements and fragments of this world (and above all to himself), and holdeth converse with them, and maketh great account of them, he is deceived and blinded, and perceiveth what is good no further than as it is most convenient and pleasant to himself and profitable to his own ends. These he holdeth to be the highest good and loveth above all. Thus he never cometh to the truth.

—*Theologia Germanica.*

Truth is the correct comprehension of all things; it is the permanent and everlasting, the real in all existence, the bliss of righteousness. . . . . Righteousness is the place in which Truth dwells, and here in the souls of mankind aspiring after righteousness, there is ample space for a rich and ever richer revelation of Truth. —*Gospel of Buddha.*

LIFE OF BUDDHA.

Fragment of Drama by Girish Chunder Ghosh.

Rendered from the Bengalee especially for "The Message of the East"

(Continued from May Number.)

ACT IV. Scene III.

(*Siddartha seated under a tree. A woman enters.*)

Woman:—Father, there seems no hope for my son.

Siddartha:—Who art thou, my good woman, and what is thy need?

Woman:—Father, hast thou forgotten thy daughter? I came pleading for the restoration of my dead son's life and thou didst tell me to bring a sesamon seed.

Siddartha:—My child, hast thou brought a sesamon seed from a place where death has had no access?

Woman:—Far have I searched, but there is no such place. From house to house and from cottage to cottage I have asked, but have found not one home where death has not entered.

Siddartha:—Why, then, dost thou wish for the life of thy dead son? Know, my good woman, Time is mighty. Not one can escape from the hands of death. That which all living beings endure, that which none can resist, Mother, why mourn because of that? Endurance is the only remedy in sorrow. There is no other way.

Woman:—Father, following thy counsel, I shall bind my heart about with fortitude. But not only for my son have I come; I came also to see thee.

Yet my son was the delight of my eyes.

(*The woman goes out.*)

Siddartha:—"Ah me, Ah me!" Such lamentations are heard in every house. When will come the day in which I shall be able to dispense the great cure to every living creature? Are all my strivings to be in vain? Hope whispers in my heart, "That cannot be". No; I shall not give place to doubt. By the light of wisdom I shall dispel the gloom of sorrow. I will not give up, so long as life endures.

(*Exit.*)

SCENE IV.

Siddartha (*seated under the Bo tree*):—Today the whole universe seems to resound with bliss. It is as if all creatures were shouting together: "This day the world's misery will be removed". Water, earth, sky, air, all are singing in great joy: "The light of wisdom is about to shine on earth." The strains of music that fall upon my ear are unfamiliar and my mind seems no longer in this mortal world. Where am I? What am I? I am forgetting everything. My heart is reaching out beyond this body into the three worlds. I cannot understand this new sense of awakening. It may be, I shall enter into *Samadhi* (deep meditation) and arise not from this seat until wisdom is attained.

(*Mara the tempter enters.*)

Mara (*to himself*):—All my hopes and all my happiness seem ended. The wretch has again lost

himself in meditation. Alas! What shall I do? Will his ear listen to my voice? (*Aloud*) My dear, thou art son of a king. It pierces my heart to see thee in this state. For whose sake art thou meditating here beneath the tree? Go. Return home. Thy wife is desolate, drowned in misery day and night. Thy father is almost dead. Thy mother writhes in grief. That thing which does not exist, why vainly seek for that? A flower growing in the sky, which no one has ever seen, why seek for such a thing?

Siddartha:—Away! Away! Thou deluding shadow, tempt me not. There, there shines the radiant light of wisdom. With my mind's eye I behold it. I shall gain it and place it in my heart. Ah! Wondrous light! Pure light!

(*Doubt enters.*)

Doubt:—If you want wisdom, is this the way? I do not understand such delusion. For twelve years you have striven, have you gained anything? Have you found your heart's desire?

Siddartha:—Go hence, thou Doubt. Never again shalt thou shake my heart.

Doubt (*running away*):—Who is there? Help! Help! I die! I die!

(*Superstition comes.*)

Superstition:—Look! Look! What a fool he is! Overthrowing all the natural laws of life, setting aside the injunctions of the Scriptures, there he sits meditating to discover a new path. By this great offense he will be ruined. He does not re-

gard God, Brahman, or Guru (Teacher). Through such egotism never will he attain salvation.

Siddartha:—Away, away, thou who dwellest in darkness! Go! Here is no place for thee.

(*Enter Desire, the God of Lust, and Rati, his wife. They sing*:)

On the blossom is swinging a bee,
My heart in the South wind stirs quiveringly,
The spring bird sings: "Coohoo, coohoo",
O friend, my heart burns hot for you;
Together at play are the lark and the moon,
Oh, where is the loved one—my heart is aswoon.

Rati (*assuming the form of Gopa, Siddartha's wife*):—Alas! Lord of my life, protect me! The fire of longing consumes me. We lived heart against heart, lips against lips, playing always in sweet converse like two birds in a tree. Alas! How hast thou forgotten such heavenly pleasure? Come, Companion of my life! I shall place thee on my heart. Look! All the flowers are drunk with fragrance, the spring breeze is blowing, the birds are singing. Come let us drink deep of the madness of love. Wrapped in each others' embrace, let us forget the three worlds.

Siddartha:—Away! Get thee hence, unchaste creature! As my beloved wife thou hast come, therefore I shall not curse thee. But the seeker of wisdom is never deluded by shadows.

All together (*running away*):—Oh! Oh! Why did we come! A burning fire consumes us.

* * * *

Siddartha:—What is this? Like water-bubbles, worlds by hundreds and hundreds float on the infinite expanse! Luminous and ever more luminous they grow! Who can number them? How many myriads of vast worlds are whirling round and round, guarded by heavenly effulgent sentinels. Different worlds, yet under the one law! How wonderful this law! Light bursts forth from darkness! Inanimate gradually becomes animate! Gross forms melt into ether, and again out of ether the gross is born. Death becomes living and again life is swallowed up by death! A mighty force destroying and rebuilding! Always the same force, acting without increase or decrease. Come to my heart, O Truth! Take possession of me. Go! Go, mortal eyes; no longer have I need of thy narrow vision. (*Through the power of Yoga he rises in the air*). This is Truth! Sorrow, like a shadow, is the companion of life. It cannot be avoided so long as one lives. Birth brings death, this is inevitable. Hatred or love, happiness or misery, all are but varying states of mind. So long as the inner eye is unopened, so long as these changing things appear not like deceptions, so long this dream of pain and pleasure will persist. He who knows this deception caused by ignorance, he ceases to cling to life. The five elements, uniting, create the idea of ego; out of the idea of ego rises the thirst of desire; and pain is the offspring of this thirst. However much one may drink to quench it, still it remains unsated. As the flame

leaps higher when the oblation is poured on it, so desire for pleasure, ambition, greed for wealth, name and fame are like pouring the oblation of butter on the fire of desire. Wise men strive to remove this thirst. With fortitude they reap pleasure or pain as the fruits of their Karma (past deeds). Through abstinence they conquer the senses, and in time this destroys their Karma. When the bonds of Karma are broken, purity claims them as her own. Thus they transcend all limitation and ignorance fades like a dream. This incomparable state, coveted by the gods even—freedom from decay and death—to this jewel of Nirvana they attain. I have found it! I have found it! From the ancient Enlightened Ones I am descended. No name have I! Nor birthplace! No caste, creed or color! Light of wisdom! Everywhere the light of wisdom! No more darkness!

(*A band of heavenly singers enters and sings.*)

Men:—Earth, water, ether, sun and air, sing in deep melody.

Maidens:—Arise! Flower, creeper, beasts and birds, sing with new life.

Together:—Today is a blissful feast!

Men:—Evil dreams are gone. Night is ended. The sun of wisdom has risen and smiles upon the earth.

Maidens:—For the sake of the poor and lowly, He became poor and lowly, living alone under a tree.

Men:—Ever intoxicated with a lofty ideal and giving eternal Truth.

Maidens:—Oh! Lark of my life, be lost by drinking the nectar of His feet.

Together:—Today is a blissful feast.

ACT V.—Scene I.

(*In the Forest. Siddartha and Kashyapa enter.*)

Kashyapa:—Where art thou going, traveller, in this home of cruel and lawless robbers? Go back, else thou wilt lose thy life. They regard me as an ascetic, hence they do not take my life; but I have no power to save thee. Seeing thy beautiful, radiant form and the mark of royal lineage on thee, thy garment seems merely a disguise. What can I say more? That it is a disguise I am sure, for the marks on thy body show me that thou art a king's son. Thy dress is strange indeed, for no order wears a dress like this.

Siddartha:—Good Sir, after much labor I have gained a priceless treasure. The robbers wander in quest of earthly riches and commit countless crimes. I shall remove their sin by bestowing upon them my priceless treasure.

Kashyapa:—Thou hast come to give a treasure to the robbers?

Siddartha:—King or peasant, poor or wicked, on all shall I bestow this treasure. To whomsoever I may see, I shall give it. For this I wander from land to land.

Kashyapa (*to himself*):—Is he mad? (*Aloud*)

Why dost thou not give this treasure unto me?

Robbers (*from without*):—Come, come, catch him. Bind him. He has money.

(*Robbers enter.*)

Siddartha:—My sons, I am coming of my own accord. What need to bind me? Yet, if you desire it, then bind me. I have naught against it. But fulfil my heart's desire, my sons, and take the treasure I have brought you.

Robbers:—Where? Give it. Where is thy treasure?

Siddartha:—To give the jewel of wisdom, for that I am come. Take this treasure, all who have need. It dispels the night of ignorance. It frees the heart from all delusion. Behold! Human beings running here and there in search of happiness; yet, think, who is truly happy in this world? Some imagine there is happiness in wealth, some in a woman's face. Ignorance ever leads them on in vain quest of happiness. But where is happiness? In the end, all enter the jaws of death. Wealth, position, beloved wife, naught escapes. Why then toil on in vain? Wherefore gather riches? Why live like wild beasts in the forest? Every second time is stealing your life away. Why do you strive so tirelessly only to earn despair? The wheel of time is ever revolving. Tell me, who is whose? Creatures floating in the sea of misery! Yet the deluded mind, forsaking the eternal treasure, seeks to gratify sense desire. How long will your sight be blinded? Open your eyes and be-

hold the eternal treasure. Give up the non-eternal. (*To one of the robbers*) Under the sway of *Maya* how much dost thou endure! Why burn night and day in the fire of desire? Never can this thirst be quenched. The fruits of Karma will ever greater grow. (*To all*) Ever must you turn on sorrow's wheel. Come to this new kingdom, where peace eternal reigns. There no fear of death, disease, or sorrow. Ever blissful! No temptation! There the insect jealously does not sting. Nor does ambition drown one in the sea of misery. There, in the midst of highest joy and heavenly light, one attains eternal life.

Robbers:—What! What does he say? Does he know some spell? Has he any power? I seem unable to walk. What dost thou say, Sire? There is no death? Is there any fear of prison?

Siddartha:—A free soul! Where is fear for him? No bondage, no anxiety, all is bliss. An ever-blissful home. That is the realm of eternal happiness. All desires fulfilled! Unbroken peace reigns in the heart.

Robber:—My Lord! I take shelter at thy feet. Save me from this great fear. Day and night, asleep, awake, I am frightened by every footfall. The rustling of the leaves makes my heart tremble. The prison ever dances before my eyes. Every moment royal sentence rises before me. My Lord! Save me from all this terror! (*To his companions*) Unbind these men! No more let cruelty and hatred exist among us.

Siddartha:—Receive, receive new Sight. Behold! Sound, touch, sight, taste, smell, all playing! Foolish egotistic mind! It thinks all is done by it. Maddened by sense desire, it commits hundreds of sinful acts and suffers the fruits of its own deeds. Be not deluded, no longer be deluded by the senses. Be not drunk with desire of pleasure. Thou shalt obtain unbroken bliss. "Non-killing is the highest virtue." Hold this in thy heart. No one then will injure thee. Give up doubt. Make thy heart a shrine of purity. Then all mortal fear will vanish.

Robber:—My lord! My lord! I am thy servant. Thy grace has saved me from the ocean of despair.

REPORTS

The following letter has recently been received from an earnest student of Vedanta in Geneva;

"It is with great pleasure that I send you a short report of Swami Paramananda's visit to Geneva, where he arrived from Paris on the evening of June 30th. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of July the Swami gave three afternoon Talks and held two evening meetings, which were regularly attended by a deeply interested audience numbering about 40 people. Some children always came to the afternoon meetings. The peace and harmony which reigned at every gathering seemed to grow intenser each time the Swami came among us, and we are most deeply grateful for the illuminating teaching of Vedanta, which satisfies both heart and brain and gives joy in the performance of daily

duties. Between the meetings the Swami's time was much taken up by interviews and visits from enquirers. He left for Gryon on July 4th and we are looking forward to a longer visit from him later, when regular lectures and study groups will be organized."

* * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston all the regular meetings continued without interruption through July and were well attended. A number of strangers came and expressed deep interest in the teaching. The subjects at the Sunday lectures were: "The Message of Vedanta", "Sleep and Samadhi", "Evil and Its Remedy", and "The Power of Non-Resistance". During August the Thursday Class and the Monday Afternoon Reception will be discontinued, but the Sunday Morning Service and the Tuesday Evening Class will be held as usual.

* * *

We extend a hearty welcome to the new monthly magazine started by the monastery of the Ramakrishna Mission at Madras. Two numbers have appeared and the spirit and energy manifest in them justify the name chosen—The "Vedanta Kesari" or "Lion of Vedanta". They contain a variety of interesting and instructive reading-matter and we have no doubt that the new publication will become one of the strong organs of the Mission. (Subscription, $1.00 a year.)

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The Message of the East

OF THE
UNIVERSITY
OF
CALIFORNIA

SEPTEMBER 1914

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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. SEPTEMBER, 1914 No. 9

Until our meditative nature is awakened, we cannot perform any task ably. The unmeditative mind is fickle and unsteady, it sees nothing clearly and mistakes are inevitable. It is not easy for one who has not gained understanding of his higher nature to live and do his work with calmness and efficiency; but he who has this understanding will never be disturbed. Even a great sorrow cannot overwhelm him. Therefore it is said that true strength and happiness come to that one alone whose heart is tranquil and firmly established in the knowledge of the Divine; but this knowledge cannot be acquired without the practice of concentration and meditation. To become meditative, however, it is not necesary to retire from the world or to give up all duties and activities. We have only to perform each act with intelligence, composure, perseverance and steadfastness. We must make our senses work under us, instead of serving them like slaves. We must not be driven about by the uncontrolled forces of our nature, but must gain complete mastery over them through right thinking and through contemplation.

When our mind has learned to rest in the Supreme; when we have awakened to the consciousness of union with Him; when it becomes second nature to us to feel God with us in all our acts, in all our thoughts, in all our life; when our whole heart, soul and body are consecrated to Him and become instruments in His hands—that is the highest goal. The man who attains this is free. Nothing can touch him, nothing can bind him. Now we are running hither and thither after little fragments of happiness; but when we have laid hold upon That which is to be found only within ourselves, we have found the remedy for all our ills and imperfections.

THE UNIVERSAL MESSAGE

In the course of meditation one needs to be merged in the Lord. If one floats on the surface, one cannot hope to reach the precious stones lying at the bottom. . . . Very few realize that the end of human life is to see God.

—*Sri Ramakrishna.*

The One, better than intellect, from whom all things flow, and to whom they all ultimately tend, is the Good. The Universe belongs to the Deity, and He will not neglect what is His own. . . . The end and aim of all things should be to attain to the First Good. —*Plato.*

They (work, love and play) all leave us rudderless and unsatisfied without prayer. They can attain creative power only in Worship, which—

inchoate or full-formed—is the source of all originality, because it sends us to our origin. The harder we work and play and the more intensely we devote ourselves to whomever and whatever we love, the more pressing is our need for orienting, recommitting, refreshing ourselves in an appeal to God. For worship is the conscious love of the Spirit of the Universe, and we need it regularly like food and sleep.

—*Richard Cabot.*

Those whose hearts are in a state of repose give forth a divine radiance, by the light of which they see themselves as they are. And only by cultivating such repose can man attain to the constant. Those who are constant are sought after by men and assisted by God. —*Chuang Tzu.*

First is a speaking of God in the essence of the soul, for here God alone dwelleth and also alone speaketh. But God speaketh therein when the soul setteth aside all that is created, bringeth her power to silence, and hath a vision into the groundwork of her pure essence. In this pure and silent soul now God the Father speaketh, and she heareth His voice. —*John Tauler.*

After having subdued by sleep all that belongs to the body, he, not asleep himself, looks down upon the sleeping senses. . . In that state the person is self-illuminated. And when (it is said that) there (in sleep) he does not see, yet he is seeing, though he does not see (with the eyes). For (the power of) sight is inseparable from the

seer, because it cannot perish. But there is then no second, nothing else different from him that he could see. An ocean is that one (inner) seer, without any duality: he dwells in Brahman (the Supreme). This is his highest goal, this is his highest success, this is his highest world, this is his highest bliss. All other creatures live on a small portion of this bliss.

—Brihadaranyaka-Upanishad.

SLEEP AND SAMADHI

Lecture by Sister Devamata

Sleep is not merely a physiological fact. It is something more than a simple state of inactivity, a time of passive forgetting. It has a deep spiritual significance and value. When, for reasons which cannot be discerned on this plane of consciousness, the individual soul came out from the Absolute, and plunging down into matter, began its weary ascent up from the protoplasmic cell back to the Absolute again, the all-loving, all-watchful Divine Mother knew that unless once at least in the twenty-four hours that striving soul touched the Supreme Soul, it could not live and go on its journey; so she laid upon it the blessing and obligation of sleep. Sleep is the call of the Mother to each child to come home from toil or play and rest close to Her Divine heart, until it is recharged with life and ready to take up again its task of unfoldment. It is Nature's chief restorative, the refuge she offers to every creature.

We see this pre-eminently among the lower animals. When they are weak or suffering, do they not always creep away into some hidden spot and go to sleep? They do not know why, but a dumb brute instinct tells them that they must hurry back and touch anew the source of their life. Among human beings, too, the great majority demand long periods of rest. How often do we hear people declare: "I cannot keep well and do my work unless I have eight or nine hours of sleep." But what they really feel the need of is not sleep, but the results of sleep,—the replenishing of their vital energies and they have not discovered that this can also be accomplished in other ways. The actual question for us is not: How much do we need to sleep; but, How can we reach the main reservoir of strength as well in waking as in sleeping? Or in other words: How can we learn to do consciously and voluntarily that which so long through sleep we have been doing involuntarily and unconsciously?

What happens when we fall asleep? The first thing is, we forget our body and bodily conditions. A man may be racked with pain, he may be beset with great anxiety or affliction, but he drops asleep and the hurt is gone. And we who stand facing the stress and difficulties of our complex life, can we not learn to do this at our will? If sleep or some drug can do it for us, why not find the way to do it for ourselves? This is the lesson which the Vedas teach when they tell man

to detach himself from his body. These nerves may quiver with pain or pleasure, but why identify ourselves with them? Rather look at them and say: "This is only a fleeting sensation in the body, but I am no more the body now than when I am asleep. Therefore, at this moment, let me fall asleep to this bodily condition and awaken to the mind, like a man who goes to sleep and dreams. As he may forget he is a pauper and in dream become a king, so I will create a new mind-world; and when the body brings a weak or painful thought, I will counteract it by a thought of strength, of cheerfulness and courage."

But suppose all dreams cease, what follows then? A deeper sleep. The restless activities of the dream-realm vanish, the whole mind grows still and man enjoys perfect rest. Why not try to reach that state in our hours of waking by detaching ourselves also from the changing mind? Let us watch its play of moods and say: "It is true, foolish mind, you have these little waves of anger, these waves of worry and distress; you feel out of sympathy, you criticise and condemn, but you are only a small part of me. Why should I, who am the greater, go your foolish way? No, I will choose a wiser path, a path of calmness, a path of steadiness, of such unwavering trust in a Supreme Guiding Power that I shall remain unshaken even when you are disturbed and falter." If we can thus cultivate the habit of standing like a witness, looking upon the ever-shifting panorama

of the mind as upon so many moving pictures, soon its troubled surface will grow quiet and we shall pass into a state of conscious dreamless sleep. Then, as in sound sleep, this outer shell which is born and dies, which gains and loses, which suffers and enjoys, will be forgotten. But are we gone? Is it a death-like state, a state of annihilation? Each one can answer for himself. When a man has been in sound sleep and awakes, is he not rëanimated? Could that be, if he had touched death? Life does not come from death. Is his mind clear? Then thought has not been annihilated; for clearer vision comes from thinking, not from mental blankness. Has he new hope and courage, as man always has when he rises from refreshing sleep? Then he has not returned from a region of dull hopelessness. The condition of sound sleep, then, cannot mean a suspension of activity, a blotting out of consciousness, but the passing into a subtler form of activity and thought, a withdrawing from the outer to the inner, from the many to the One, from the manifested to the Power that manifests. And only because man has touched that Power seated in his heart does he come back recharged with life and energy.

But when the individual ceases to be a detached part and becomes one with the Whole, when his entire organism seems unified and all the warring forces flow in one homogeneous current, what is that state? It is the state of *Samadhi* or super-

consciousness. And by the loving provision of the Divine Mother we attain this state unknowingly once at least in every day, when we sleep soundly. It is the state of new life; without it we are dull and heavy. It is the state of new joy; without it we are sad and soul-weary. It is the state of new light; without it we grow blind and fall. And is it not then the state which every man must work for? It cannot be left a matter of chance; it is something which he should hold within his grasp at every moment. No human being can for one instant afford to be disconnected from his Source. If you knew that here was the only pure water in the universe, would you leave it? No; you would build your house beside it and you would call out to others to join you, until a city would spring up around you. If you had been told that in one spot only was there pure air and everywhere else was death, would you not always keep the road open to that place and never wander far enough away not to be able to return! Similarly, if you believe that there is one Source of life, one Source of knowledge, one Source of bliss, should you not discover for yourself the road to It and the way to travel that road? That is why the great Vedic Rishis constantly call to every man: "Go within. Find your true nature, the Divine Essence of your being. Identify yourself with That, for until That is found, danger threatens you on every side."

Be not content to sleep eight or nine hours out

of the twenty-four, but sleep every moment the sleep which means contact with the Source. Let all your life be a waking in the sound sleep state and a sleep in the hours of waking. Let the thread of your consciousness bind you unceasingly to the Centre. But, you will say, surely there is a difference between sound sleep and *Samadhi;* otherwise, why are not all men illumined when they wake? A great teacher in India once defined the difference to me thus: A man when he falls asleep, is like one who backs into a room; his face is turned towards the door and his back to all that is in the room; therefore he sees only what is outside and nothing inside the room. The man who goes into *Samadhi,* on the contrary, is like one who enters face forward; he sees everything in the room and what is left behind is not visible to him. So it is with us. We go into the state of sleep always with our senses pointed outward to the world. We drop asleep thinking of our worldly griefs and worldly needs, of all the things which concern this little outer man; and when we wake, our thoughts are still pointed in that direction and we have no consciousness of the place where we have been. Yet we have been there just the same and have had the benefit so far as we could without seeing it. The proof is that we come back refreshed. When, however, a man goes into *Samadhi,* he goes with the whole soul quivering for God. Every fibre of his being is turned Godward, his inner eye is strained to perceive Him; so he quickly loses sight

of what is left behind and sees only what is there. Which one gains the greater good from his visit to that room? Which one is able to bring back the richer store of new strength and power? There can be no doubt as to the answer. We have only to look at the contrasting lives of the sense-bound worldling and the God-illumined prophet to divine it.

That which we have been doing like dumb animals, is it not time for us to begin to do as wise men? The whole lesson has been set before us. We need not search the Scriptures for it, or go to a mountain cave to learn it. We have only to study what we do once at least in every turn of the sun. There the lesson is written out clearly for us and we have been repeating it all the while automatically and without understanding. Now the time has come for us to repeat it intelligently and at our will. But we cannot master the whole of it at once. We must begin gradually. Let us first try to detach ourselves from the tyranny of this body. As we drop our physical ills and discomforts at the hour of sleep, so let us learn to drop them out of our waking consciousness. At present we add to their power and reality by constantly dwelling on them; whereas, if we kept our attention fixed less on our bodily states, many of them would pass unperceived. Also the body would be stronger, for constant thought turned on it wears and weakens it. It needs to be left to itself, as children do. Give it necessary simple care and then

forget it. Do not always be a body. Sometimes be a soul, or even a thinking mind.

This does not mean, however, dwelling in the memory or imagination. A wholesome mental life does not consist in constantly feeding on one's own experience and opinions, or on those of others, but in passing beyond the petty personal plane to larger problems and forming habits of original thought. Everyone can do this who has the desire and determination to go to the origin of things. The value of memory is much over-rated. Remembering too often clogs the mind with useless material and becomes a serious obstacle to concentration. It makes man retrospective rather than introspective. The enlightened man has no need of memory. It is necessary only to the little man. He is like a poverty-stricken housewife, who saves every small bit of cloth for some future garment; or like one who lives far from the spring and must store his water in rows of pails. It is because we do not keep in contact with the Source that we attach such importance to collecting facts and experiences. Let us touch That and we have just the knowledge we need at every moment without the aid of memory.

There is in the world one Supreme Consciousness. As that Universal Consciousness trickles down through the narrow channels of the senses, we call it sense-perception; as it runs in broader stream through the mind, we call it thought; when it flows through the intellect, we call it reason or

discrimination; as it pours in spontaneous current through the heart, we call it moral beauty; but when it passes through no one limiting channel, but manifests itself pure, undivided, single, then it is *Samadhi* or the state of complete illumination. When this is reached, light floods the whole organism and every faculty attains its highest efficiency. Then alone is man's education complete. Every living being is travelling towards that goal, but each one of us may by our choice make the journey a long or short one. We may linger content and sense-bound in the dim cave of this body, we may grope our way about in the deluding twilight of the mind, or push on into the clearer light of intellect or reason, but never shall we stand in the full daylight until we develop our superconscious faculties. With those only can we see "face to face." Nor need we fear that we shall then belittle or neglect this outer physical shell. Do we find the master-workman throwing away his tools? As his skill increases, does he not discover new possibilities of usefulness in each one? So will it be when we become master-workmen of this life. Far from despising this instrument of the body, mind and senses, we shall for the first time understand its true use and worth.

When we thus come into conscious possession of our whole being and learn to live in unbroken contact with our Source, we shall find within us an inexhaustible store of refreshment. We shall be like a man with an unlimited bank account. The

poor man carries all his earnings in his pocket, but the multi-millionaire can afford to go about with only a few cents on his person, because he knows that he may always draw upon his bank. So will it be with us. When we have established a conscious connection with that Divine Power within, we shall never lack for anything. If a perplexing problem confronts us, we shall have just the wisdom necessary to solve it. Is there an unexpected call upon our strength? We shall have more than enough for the occasion. Does some one turn to us in trouble or perplexity? By a look we can pierce to the core of his heart and understand his need better than he himself.

Such is the power for help and blessing latent in each of us. Have we the right then to go on in heaviness and darkness, asleep although we believe ourselves awake? No, let us rouse ourselves from this little sleep and begin to master the secret of that larger sleep. You may say: "I have not the time." Then leave your daylight hours as they are and begin merely with your hours of rest. Take five minutes night and morning from your bodily sleep and spend it in spiritual practice. If before you lose consciousness at night, you can fix your mind on higher thoughts, all your sleep will be like a meditation and your whole system will be renewed not only physically but spiritually. Then when you wake, do not throw away the real benefit of your sleep by at once loosening your hold on the inner and seizing the outer. Rather tighten your grasp, by directing your first waking

thoughts toward the Supreme Fountainhead of all life and consciously uniting every part of your being with Him. Make it a rule never to let your worldly concerns enter your mind until you have filled it full of God by prayer and meditation. At the close of a few days take another five minutes from your rest, then another, until without perceiving it, you will have transmuted at least one hour of sleep into an hour of meditation.

Through such simple practice the entire organism will become refined and purified, a sense of lightness will replace the heaviness which now so often overpowers us, and we shall suffer less from fatigue. Also the mind and nerves will be quieter, each task will be done with less strain and friction; there will be in consequence less waste of energy and the system will no longer demand so many hours of rest. We find this among those who have attained a high spiritual development. While others sleep, they meditate; yet they show no signs of wakeful weariness. More than all else, a new world will open before us—a world of spiritual joy and beauty. And as by our higher vision we begin to discern the God within all things, we shall feel that those around us who live unconscious of that Presence are really sleeping, while only those truly wake who walk with all their superconscious faculties alert; for as the Bhagavad-Gita says: "That which is night to all men, therein the self-subjugated remains awake; and in that where all beings wake, that is night for the Knower of Self."

THE KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

PART III

(Continued from June Number)

X

Beyond the senses are the objects, beyond the objects is the mind, beyond the mind is the intellect, beyond the intellect is the great Atman (Self).

XI

Beyond the Great is the Unmanifested; beyond the Unmanifested is the Purusha (the True Self); beyond the Purusha there is nothing. That is the end, that is the final goal.

In these two verses the Teacher shows the process of discrimination, by which one attains knowledge of the subtle Self. Beginning with the sense-organs, he leads up to the less and less gross, until he reaches that which is subtlest of all, the True Self of man. The senses are dependent on sense-objects, because without these the senses would have no utility. The mind, in turn, is superior to sense-objects, because unless these objects can appeal to the mind, they cannot influence the senses. Over the mind the determinative faculty exercises power; this determinative faculty is governed by the *Jivatman* or individual Self; beyond this Self is the Great Unmanifested Nature (*Prakriti* or creative force), and above this is the *Purusha* or Supreme Self. Than this there is nothing higher. That is the goal, the Supreme Abode of Peace and

Bliss. One who has found this, has found everything.

All great Teachers, therefore, declare to man: "Know Thy Self." "Thou art that which thou art seeking." That Treasure for which thou art searching is within; or, as Christ said: "The Kingdom of Heaven is within you." This is the watchword of all the sages. Man must go beyond his lower self. If he wishes to gain a vision of the True Self or God, he must first control his grosser, outgoing forces. The ordinary man, like the animal, finds the greatest pleasure in the gratification of his sensual appetites. As he rises from the brute plane of bodily enjoyment to the higher plane of mind, his discriminative faculty awakens and he begins to perceive and delight in subtler things,—books, science, invention, art. Then the mind, growing still finer, learns to find its joy in spiritual pursuits. When, through the thought of spirit or God, his intellectual perceptions become purified, he obtains a vision of the Supreme and finds completeness of life.

XII

This Atman (Self), hidden in all beings, does not shine forth, but It is seen by subtle Seers through keen and subtle intellect.

It may be asked: "If It dwells in all living beings, why do we not see It?" Because the ordinary man's vision is too dull and distracted. It is only visible to those whose intellect has been purified by constant thought on the Supreme and

whose sight therefore has become refined and sharpened. This keenness of vision comes only when all our forces have been made one-pointed through steadfast practice of concentration and meditation.

XIII

A wise man should control speech by mind, mind by intellect, intellect by the great Jivatman (individual Self) and that by the Peaceful One, the Paramatman (Supreme Self).

Here Yama gives a practical lesson in the method to be followed if one wishes to realize the Supreme. First a man must control his outgoing senses by the mind. That is, he must practise discrimination and not waste his energies on non-essential things. Having indrawn his sense-powers, he must next collect his entire mind, which is scattered here and there, and indraw it into the depths of the heart. This is always the process to be followed in the practice of meditation. The mind must be collected from senses and sense-objects and attached to the intelligent, illumined *Atman* which dwells within; and when the whole heart and soul are focussed upon that *Atman,* then one becomes illumined.

XIV

Arise! Awake! Having reached the Great Ones (Illumined Teachers), gain understanding. The path is as sharp as a razor, insurmountable and difficult to pass over, so the wise declare.

The sages call to us: Awake from the slumber of ignorance, which makes you think you are a man, dependent on mortal things, that you are subject to disease and death and all imperfections. From that dream awake and arise. Go and find out those who know about the Self, because only those who have had direct perception of It can tell truly what It is. This Knowledge is not a matter of book learning, it is based on experience. Therefore seek out those who know, receive their instruction and blessing, and follow them faithfully. The sages declare the path to be as sharp as the blade of a razor; therefore one needs watchfulness, faithfulness, steadfastness and strength. No sleepy person, no dull, lazy, lifeless person, can attain that *Atman*, which is within. One must be strong, wakeful and determined.

XV

Knowing That (the Atman) which is soundless, touchless, formless, undecaying; also tasteless, eternal and odorless; beginningless, endless, beyond the unmanifested and everlasting, (knowing That) man escapes from the mouth of death.

Yama here gives a definition of the essence of our being known as the *Atman* or True Self. Because of Its extreme subtlety, It cannot be heard or felt or smelled or tasted like any ordinary object. It never dies, It has no beginning or end. It is unchangeable, indestructible, everlasting. Realizing That, man escapes from death and at-

tains immortality. Thus the Teacher has gradually led Nachiketas to a point where he can reveal to him the secret of death. The boy had thought that there was a place where he could stay and become immortal. But Yama shows him that immortality is not gained as long as man clings to name and form and relative ideas of life. It is when he has risen above all limitations, when his thoughts have been purified, when his vision has become so subtle and keen that it can behold the glory of the *Atman* that dwells within; then alone he is safe from the mouth of death. For what dies? Form. That which has birth, dies. Therefore the man of form, name and all that our senses perceive, dies; but not that which dwells within. Although inconceivably subtle, the sages have always made an effort through similies and analogies to give some idea of this inner Self or the God within. They have described It as beyond mind and speech, too subtle for ordinary perception, yet they have tried to put every one on the path, in order that through contemplation each might reach the goal and be convinced of the nature of the Soul or *Atman*.

XVI

The intelligent man, who has heard and repeated the ancient story of Nachiketas, told by Death, is glorified in the world of Brahman.

XVII

He who with devotion recites this highest secret before an assembly of Brahmins (pious men) or

at the time of Shraddha (funeral ceremonies), gains everlasting reward, he gains everlasting reward.

Part IV

I

The Self-existent (Lord) created the senses outgoing; for this reason man sees the external (world) but not the inner Atman (Self). Some wise men, however, desiring immortality, with eyes (senses) turned away (from the external) see the Great Self within.

In the last chapter the Ruler of Death gave instructions regarding the nature and glory of the Self. Now he shows the reason why the Self is not seen by the majority. It is because man's mind is constantly drawn outward through the channels of his senses and this prevents his seeing the inner Self (*Pratyagatman*); but now and then someone, wiser than others, seeking to escape from the misery of this world, withdraws his mind from external objects and goes within, where he attains the vision of the undying Self.

II

Children (the indiscriminative) pursue external objects of desire; (thus) they fall into the widespread snare of death. But the wise, knowing the nature of immortality, do not seek the permanent among fleeting objects.

Those who are ignorant like children, and who have no power to distinguish between the Real and the unreal, the fleeting and the permanent, set their

hearts on the changeable things of this world and hence cannot escape from misery and disappointment. To these death must seem a reality, because they identify themselves with that which is born and dies. But the wise, who have perceived the true nature of things, are no longer deluded by the passing charm of the phenomenal world and do not seek for permanent happiness among its fleeting enjoyments.

III

That by which one knows form, taste, smell, sound, touch and conjugal enjoyment, by That also one knows whatever remains to be known. This verily is That (which thou hast asked to know).

IV

That by which a mortal perceives both in dream and in waking, by knowing that Great All-pervading Atman (Self), the wise man grieves no more.

In these verses the teacher tries to make plain that the *Atman* is not easily perceived owing to Its great subtlety; yet all knowledge as well as all sense perception in every state of consciousness—sleeping, dreaming or waking—is possible only because the Self exists. There can be no knowledge or perception independent of the Self. Wise men, aware of this, identify themselves with the Supreme, Omnipresent Spirit, and thus transcend the realm of grief.

REPORTS

We are glad to be able to announce that Swami Paramananda, head of the Vedanta Centre of

Boston, has returned safely from Europe. When the war broke out, he was visiting friends at Gryon-sur-Bex in Switzerland. The mobilization of the Swiss army had such an immediate effect on the life even of that retired mountain spot, that almost at once practically all the shops were closed and it became necessary as early as August 1st to travel to Lausanne, two hours distant by train, for provisions. On August 6th the Swami decided to go to Geneva in order to procure a passport and make an effort to move northward. Having delivered courses of lectures there last season and also this year, his many friends persuaded him to take up the work again, and during the fortnight that he was waiting to secure train accommodation to Paris, he held a number of classes and gave two public lectures, which were remarkably well attended. Among those who showed special interest in the teaching was Mr. Sublet, a prominent Protestant minister of Geneva, who gained the Swami's consent to translate into French a number of the Swami's works and publish them in his well-known religious journal, "L'Essor."

Finally on August 19th the Swami was able to set out for Paris, accompanied by one of his friends, who made the journey especially to protect him, returning at once to Switzerland. The usual time of ten hours between Geneva and Paris stretched out to thirty, and three changes were necessary. At one place they were forced to spend over five hours in the middle of the night out in the open under trees and on the ground, as no one was allowed to remain in the station while the military trains were passing. At the Hotel Normandy in Paris they found only a few women in charge; the food was of the plainest and everything was on a martial basis. Looking over the

paper, the Swami learned that a French boat was sailing on the 22nd from Havre. He hurried to the steamship office the following morning and was informed that a single first-class cabin had just been given up and was available; but they refused to take his traveller's checks and he had not enough ready money to pay for it. They consented, however, to hold it until noon. In the meantime the Swami, with the help of the friend with him, was able to make up the amount and secure the passage, paying only the ordinary rate. The ride to Havre again took a whole night instead of three hours, and the train was crowded to suffocation, as was the ship also, many even travelling in the steerage. The Swami reached Boston late on August 30th. He will at once assume charge of the work at the Boston Centre.

During September only the Sunday morning service will be held. The Swami will conduct this and deliver the usual lecture. All other meetings will be discontinued. The steady interest shown throughout the summer in the work, not only by the members, but also by the many strangers who came to the meetings, seems to bear out the promise of the spring,—that with the removal of the Centre to its permanent home, a new period of growth and more extended usefulness was begun. There can be no doubt that the public has gained added confidence and is awaking more and more to the value and need of the teaching.

* * *

We have just received the annual report of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama at Brindaban. It was established seven years ago to minister to the needs of poor pilgrims who come in such large numbers to that holy place, by providing them with food, medicine, and nursing. The first year

the number cared for was 26 indoor and 275 outdoor patients. During the past year the numbers have risen to 260 indoor and 30,903 outdoor patients. Besides these a smaller number were helped with food and medicine in their own quarters. There could be no more striking proof of the usefulness of the institution. So far the work has been carried on in the outer buildings of a temple, temporarily loaned for that purpose; but they are wholly inadequate and unsuited to the needs of the hospital and it is earnestly hoped that before long, through the generosity of the public, proper quarters may be erected.

* * *

It is gratifying to learn that all of Sister Nivedita's scattered writings are to be gathered into book form and made available to the reading public. The first volume thus prepared, under the title "Studies from an Eastern Home," gives unconnected but interesting glimpses into Indian life. With an understanding touch, sure and sympathetic, she reveals some of the beauty and deep faith manifest in the religious festivals and pilgrimages, as well as in the daily life of the Hindu woman. She says, "The whole of Hinduism is one long sanctification of the common life." And then again, "The holiness of nature is the fundamental thought of Hindu civilization." There are lovely pictures of the Indian villages through which she passed on her northern pilgrimage. Leaving for a space the religious life, she also writes of sociological problems,—the jute industry, the famines and the social demoralization resulting from them. In one sketch the horrors of the plague are touched on; and then, in a few vivid lines, she draws a picture of the wonderful love existing between the Hindu mother and son.

BY SWAMI PARAMANANDA

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Swami Paramananda, known to the Madras public through his six years residence at the Ramakrishna Math here, and also as the author of various works, including a recent scholarly translation of the Bhagavad-Gita has just published a new book, "The Way of Peace and Blessedness". It has the same dynamic ring as his earlier work, "The Path of Devotion," now in its third edition; and no one can read it without feeling a fresh stirring of courage and hope. . . . The English is remarkably clear, fluent and graceful. There are six chapters in all and each one is full of strength and inspiration both for the outer and the inner life. INDIAN REVIEW, Madras.

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BAL

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The Message of the East

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" *11th*	*Life after Death.*
" *18th*	*Concentration and Meditation.*
" *25th*	*Faith and Devotion.*
November 1st	*Fearlessness.*
" *8th*	*Discrimination and Wisdom.*
" *15th*	*Law of Karma.*
" *22nd*	*Self-Mastery.*
" *29th*	*Tolerance and Universality.*
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THE MESSAGE OF THE EAST

"And behold the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the East"
Ezekiel.
"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. OCTOBER, 1914 No. 10

This world is not for cowards. Do not try to fly. Look not for success or failure. Join yourself to the perfectly unselfish will and work on. Know that the mind which is born to succeed joins itself to a determined will and perseveres. You have the right to work, but do not become so degenerate as to look for results. Work incessantly, but see something behind the work. Even good deeds can bind a man in great bondage. Therefore be not bound by good deeds or by desire for name and fame. Those who know this secret pass beyond this round of birth and death and become immortal.

The ordinary *Sannyasi* (one who has renounced) gives up the world, goes out and thinks of God. The real *Sannyasi* lives in the world, but is not of it. Those who deny themselves, live in the forest and chew the cud of unsatisfied desires, are not true renouncers. Live in the midst of the battle of life. Anyone can keep calm in a cave or when asleep. Stand in the whirl and madness of action

and reach the Centre. If you have found the Centre, you cannot be moved.

Unpublished notes of Class Talks by Swami Vivekananda.

SELF-HELP AND SELF-SURRENDER

By Swami Paramananda

Self-Help and Self-Surrender are the cardinal teachings of all religions and philosophies. Man is persistently told on the one hand that he must "raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself, for he alone is his own friend and he alone is his own enemy"; while on the other hand he is taught with equal insistence that he should never rely on his individual strength, but should trust wholly to God. How are we to reconcile these two apparently contradictory ideas? How can we be self-helping and at the same time surrender ourselves wholly to the Supreme? Yet we find these two ideas preached in all Scriptures by all Teachers; so although they may seem diametrically opposite, there must be some relation, some basis of harmony between them.

There are different grades in the notion of the individual ego. Our first conception of I-ness comes through birth and environment. We are born in a certain family, with a certain name and position, and we measure our whole importance by these; but as we grow in understanding, we learn

to identify ourselves less and less with our outer condition and nature. Then we discover that there are finer forces than the merely physical upon which we can depend. When in ordinary human existence a man says "I am the doer", that sense of I-ness arises from his identification of himself with the body. He is conscious that he has strong muscles, that he has a certain amount of power; but this strength, being entirely confined to the physical plane, is necessarily limited. He may not realize this as long as he has a healthy body and can accomplish whatever he wishes through his bodily energies, but sooner or later he must come to recognize that the power manifested through the physical is too insufficient to carry him very far. This naturally leads him to seek something higher and greater upon which he can safely lean.

Thus in all the various stages of progression, we shall carry the same idea of ego, only with different understanding. The ego which binds us to the body and bodily conditions is called the unripe ego and this brings misery and misfortune; but the ripe ego, which springs from our higher nature, liberates us. It is this ego which leads us to surrender ourselves wholly to God. Of course self-surrender does not mean that we have to abandon all duties and activities. On the contrary, it is through consecrated action, through constant practice of the Ideal, that we become purified and are able to see the hand of the Divine in everything. But as long as we believe that we are the doers, we

must help ourselves. So long as we feel that the whole responsibility lies in our hands, we must make every possible effort. It is useless to suppose that we can give up all idea of ego at once and be conscious that God is working through us. We do not see God working. We are talking, we are performing our tasks, we have hands and feet, we possess strength. As long as we hold to these notions, we must act for ourselves. We cannot do otherwise. But if in all our actions we practise discrimination, that will in time unfold our true nature and enable us to perceive the real source of our power. When we become conscious of that mighty Cause of all things, then we cannot but yield ourselves up to His guidance. Thus self-help will lead to self-surrender.

The more clearly we see God working everywhere, the more easily we shall be able to resign ourselves to Him. It is very difficult for ignorant people to practise self-surrender, because they have not consciously experienced the existence of a Cosmic Power. They do not know that there is such a thing. They must first test their own powers. They must prove through the use of all their energies, physical and mental, whether they themselves are the real doers or whether they are governed by some superior force. They must learn through the practice of discrimination what part of their being is matter and what part is God; then when they have come to perceive the difference between soul and body, spirit and matter, the

dying and the undying, they will surely cling to that which is deathless, for who does not cling to life, who will not naturally look for help and protection to That which is most mighty? It is not an easy thing to surrender ourselves absolutely to God. We must first understand something of His Divine Nature and Power; otherwise, if we pretend to practise self-surrender, without really believing that God is the only Doer and that all happens through His will, our words and actions will always be inconsistent. There is a parable of a Brahman who once killed a cow. Killing for a Brahman, whose life is supposed to be dedicated to God and to the practice of non-injury and love for all creatures, is a terrible crime. When the Brahman was accused of killing the cow, he declared: "I did not do it. Indra (the Lord of the Senses) is responsible, not I." To show him his error, God, assuming human form, entered his garden and began to praise its beauty and the skill of his gardener. The Brahman replied with pride: "Oh, no, I myself have done everything; come and I will show you the different parts of my garden." As he led his visitor about, he kept explaining: "See, I planted these trees and shrubs, I laid out these paths, I made these flower beds". Every other word was "I". The Lord listened patiently for some time; then he exclaimed: "You have done all these things; only for killing the cow the poor Lord was responsible."

That is too often our position. We may say:

"Thy will, not mine", but we feel in our heart of hearts that we are the real doers. If a harsh word is spoken, we feel hurt and grow angry; or if we are praised, we become elated. But this is not the case with one who knows that everything happens through God's will. He is always the same, in happiness, in misery, in praise or blame. He accepts all things with even-mindedness. He does not lose his balance, he does not curse life when things go wrong; because he recognizes that God is the Doer and that whatever comes from Him must be a blessing. Surrendering to God makes a man so mighty, so fearless, that nothing in life or death can disturb his serenity. Such faith in the Supreme is the basis of true self-reliance. With such faith one can accomplish the most impossible things. As Christ said: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible to you." Such is the power of faith. When we have realized the Divine nature within us, what can shake us? As long, however, as we identify ourselves with name, form and physical limitations, our power must be limited and therefore our vision of Truth, our knowledge of God must also be veiled; because darkness and light cannot co-exist and the sense of "I" is the greatest darkness which can cover the soul. The sages indeed have declared that there is no enemy greater or more potent than the ego.

As long as we identify ourselves with this ego or our lower nature, we can never transcend delusion and ignorance. Therefore we must subdue our lower self by surrendering it to the Higher Self. Let that Higher Self, or the God within, take the lead in everything. The true devotee says: "Not I, not I, but Thou, I am nothing. What can I accomplish? The sooner I can resign myself to Thy will, the better." The *Jnani* or philosopher declares: "I am not this body. I am not the senses. I am none of these things. I am He. I am that which is formless, deathless, eternal, unchangeable." One is the dualistic point of view, the other the monistic; but both lead to the same end. Christ expressed the two phases in different stages of his spiritual consciousness. When he said: "Not my will but Thine be done"; "Thou art my Father, my Lord, I am Thy son, Thy servant"; His attitude was that of a devotee. When on the other hand he declared "I and my Father are one". He expressed the monistic attitude of a follower of the path of wisdom or *Jnanam*. In one phase we look upon God as a separate existence. He is the Creator and Preserver, the Real Father, and we surrender to Him, recognizing the limitation of our lower self. In the other phase we rise above the plane of the lower self and realize our identity with the Supreme. In either case, whether we see that Truth within ourselves or outside ourselves, we transcend human imperfection.

When we are convinced that God is the only

Doer, the only Guide, that all the power which we possess comes from Him and that we are merely instruments in His hand, we attain freedom even in this life and nothing can overthrow us. But the ego is very deluding. It is said that even the gods are deceived and fall under its sway. In one of the Upanishads the story is told that once the Devas (Bright Ones) achieved a great victory, and being filled with pride, they proclaimed: "This victory is ours. We ourselves have achieved it" and each one boasted of his power. Suddenly they perceived a mysterious form. Brahman, the Doer of all things, appeared before them; but they did not know what it was that they saw, so one by one they were sent to find out. First the Fire-God approached the mysterious form, who asked him what power he possessed. "I have the power to burn the whole universe." "Then try to burn this straw" the Lord said, but he could not. Then came the Wind-God and Brahman asked him what power he possessed. "I can blow this entire universe away." "Then blow this straw which I place before you." He tried but could not. At last Indra, the head of the gods, went; and as he approached nearer, he realized that the mysterious form was none other than Brahman, the Supreme Lord Himself, to Whom all glory and praise belong, that to Him alone was due their victory and not to themselves.

Surrender to God is the greatest sign of wisdom. The ignorant man, who clings to this ego, must

suffer constantly. The man who surrenders himself to God as the Doer of all things, he alone finds peace. Through his life, through his actions, he becomes blessed and brings blessing to others; for he no longer acts through selfishness or ignorance, but he becomes a direct instrument in the hands of God, and all his doings are filled with Divine Love and Wisdom.

BENGALI HYMN

(Translated especially for "The Message of the East.")

What joy can there be in my life, O Thou Merciful Lord,
If the bee of my soul is not forever lost in the Lotus of Thy Feet?
Of what use countless wealth,
If Thou, most precious of all Treasures, art not watchfully guarded?
I care not even to look on the tender face of my child,
If in that sweet, moon-like face I behold not Thy lovely image.
What avails the light of the moon?
For me it is darkness, if through that rising moon the light of Thy love does not shine.
Even the chaste wife's pure devotion seems impure,
If that love-jewel is not set with the gem of Thy love Divine.
Like the stinging bite of a viper
Is doubt of Thee, born of delusion.
What more can I say, O Lord?
This will I say: Thou art the priceless Jewel of my heart, the Abode of Infinite Bliss.

THE GREAT LIGHT OF NADIA

At the moment when Europe was convulsed by the Reformation, a new fire of religious fervor was also sweeping over India, lighted by a mighty Spiritual Teacher known as Lord Gaurunga (the Golden-bodied) or Sri Krishna-Chaitanya (the God-Awakener). He was born at Nadia in Bengal in 1486, just three years later than Martin Luther at Eisleben. Nadia, on the Ganges about seventy miles north of Calcutta, was at that time a noted seat of learning. The whole population, men and women, old and young, it would appear from the numerous historic records left, was given over to the pursuit of knowledge. "Thousands every day came to the city from all parts of India, some to begin and some to complete their education", so an eye-witness declares, "and thousands left every day after having obtained their diplomas". In every street were several *Toles* or colleges, some of which counted their students by tens of hundreds. These thronged the river banks and public squares, passing their time in long and intricate discussions, much as did the university world in scholastic France at the time of Guillaume de Champeaux and Abelard.

Great scholars even conquered wealth and property by force of intellect. The story is told of the "world-conquering" Keshava of Kashmir, who came to Nadia in triumphal pomp with numerous attendants, tents, elephants and horses, having already vanquished every professor in every learned

city of India. On his arrival he launched the proud challenge that if any scholar could defeat him, he would forfeit all his property to Nadia; but should he be victorious, then the town must pay him a large indemnity. Although Lord Gaurunga or Nimai, as he was then called, was still only a boy of 18, he had already attained such eminence as a professor that his college was among the most important in the city and he was regarded as a teacher of unequalled power. He had also written a profound commentary on the Nyaya philosophy, but finding one day that it threatened to displace the life work of an older scholar, Raghunath, who had long striven for preëminence in the Nyaya and was heart-broken at the thought of so astute a rival, Nimai threw his commentary into the river. He seemed wholly devoid of the ambition that rent the hearts of his fellow-professors. He taught because boys and even men of years came to learn of him; and although he exacted rigid discipline in the class room, once the lessons over, he romped and played like the youngest of his scholars.

One moonlight night, as he sat on the river bank surrounded by his pupils, the great Keshava passed and growing interested in Nimai's literary discussions, he joined the group. "You are Nimai Pundit, I understand", he began. "I am glad to make your acquaintance, for I have heard that despite your youth, you have attained great proficiency in Grammar and Philology". Nimai, bowing low, re-

plied modestly: "I am only a young student, while you are a conqueror in the field of learning. Compared with you I am nothing. But since you are a poet of world-wide reputation, will you not recite to us a description of the Ganges that our sins may be washed away?" Keshava, flattered by the request, at once composed with great skill and easy self-assurance one hundred Sanskrit couplets in praise of the holy river, reciting them amid loud ejaculations of surprise and admiration. Nimai's pupils feared for him a complete eclipse; he alone sat listening with gentle unconcern. When Keshava had finished, he made reference to a couplet in the middle, repeating it with perfect accuracy. Keshava exclaimed at his ability to remember so well after only once hearing, to which Nimai replied quietly: "If Saraswati (the goddess of learning) can give to one the power to compose such a poem, She can bestow as well on another the power to remember it." Then one by one he took up the verses and pointed out the subtle defects in each, until the proud Savant, confounded, left the place in anger. Some hours after, however, he sought out Nimai in his home and fell at his feet in humble supplication, declaring that in a vision God had revealed to him Nimai's Divine Nature and he came begging to become the least of his disciples. What transpired no one knows, but the next day the arrogant Keshava distributed his vast wealth to the poor of Nadia, put on the orange robe of the ascetic and disappeared from the sight of men.

Such empty triumphs of mere intellect, however, meant little to Nimai. A mightier force was stirring in his heart, which at last carried him on a pilgrimage to Gaya, a spot hallowed by close association with Sri Krishna. On his return it was impossible for him to take up again the dry routine of the class room. Each day he went to his *Tole* determined to explain the profundities of Sanskrit Grammar, but instead he spent the whole school session talking of God and the joys of devotion. At first his pupils heard him with delight; then some, fearing lest they might fail in obtaining their diplomas, reluctantly withdrew to other colleges; while others, casting aside all desire for learning, joined the ever-growing stream of devotees who began to gather round their Master. Saints and scholars, profligates and scoffers, all fell under the spell of his Divine charm. Sometimes a single word, a touch, a loving embrace would transform a jeering worldling into the lowliest of disciples. Hundreds on hundreds came, swept, it is said, by such fervor of devotion that worldly ambitions and occupations were forgotten and whole days and nights were spent in sacred singing, dancing and prayer. Nimai, or Gaurunga, never preached. He taught wholly by example, living as a humble worshipper and thus showing others how to worship God. "Take the name of *Hari* (He who draws all men unto Him), and you will be saved", were his constant words.

He never claimed honor for himself and would protest when others stooped to touch his feet or show him reverence.

On occasions, however, it is recorded, he drew aside the human veil that masked his God-like nature and let the Divine shine forth in its full glory. At such moments, so the records tell us, the room and even the whole house became filled with a subtle light and fragrance, while such a flood of love and sweetness poured from him that those about him felt drunk with joy. Such a transfiguration took place one day at the home of Sreebas. The devotees, beholding his transcendent beauty and plunged "in a sea of happiness", one historian writes, hurried to bring some offering to lay before him in token of their love; but whatever they brought him, Sri Gouranga returned to them a like gift. Did some one offer him a garland? From about his own neck he would take another, laden with the holy sweetness of his person, and place it on the shoulders of the devotee. So likewise with every gift, to teach man that whatever he may offer in humble devotion to the Lord, that gift God in His yearning love will return multiplied a hundredfold.

Thus one by one Sri Gouranga called all those present, both men and women, and bestowed on each some special blessing. Only Mukunda, a chosen follower, was left weeping outside the door. He could hear the Lord's voice and perceive all that was transpiring within, yet the Lord did not

bid him enter. At last, unable to bear it longer, he called to Sreebas: "Do not intercede for me. Only ask the Lord to tell me, if such is His Divine pleasure, whether He will ever allow me to see Him." Sri Gouranga gave answer: "Mukunda, thou shalt certainly see me, but after ten million births". Hearing this, Mukunda rose and began to dance, repeating over and over in delight: "I shall see Him, I shall see Him. He has promised it". So engrossed was he in his joy that he did not hear the Lord call: "Mukunda, come". His friends, however, ran to tell him and when they brought him, the Lord embraced him tenderly, saying: "Forgive me, Mukunda, I desired to test thy faith and make thee an example of true devotion to the world. Although I denied thee every favor and made thee the least of all, still thou hast remained steadfast in thy love and trust, rejoicing at the thought that even after ten million births thou wouldst see Me. Truly there are few devotees like unto thee."

It was some time after this that Nimai, now twenty-four years of age, made a journey to the ascetic Keshava Bharati to be initiated as a *Sannyasi* or monk. At first the ascetic was unwilling to fulfill his desire, exclaiming: "I have never seen a being like you. You look more tender than a flower. You could never bear the rigid discipline of our Order. Besides you have no need to enter any religious order. You are already greater than all men." As Nimai stood talking with Keshava

Bharati, a great crowd had gathered and the monk, pointing to it, said: "See how these mere bystanders weep at the thought that one so young and beautiful should wish to renounce the world." But Nimai, turning, said to them: "Why do you weep? If you love me, wish me joy, for tomorrow I shall be released from the bondage of worldliness. Bless me, fathers and mothers." The report had gone abroad that one more a god than man was about to take *Sannyas* and on the morrow, it is told, thousands gathered to assist at his initiation. His face "shone with ecstacy," we read in one record of the time, and the vast crowd of men and women that surrounded him looked upon him spellbound. When the barber was called to shave his head, a cry of protest went up from the throng and the barber, unwilling to touch the soft glossy hair, withdrew his shears; but Nimai by gentle coaxing overcame his reluctance. So also with Keshava Bharati, who at last with faltering hands gave him the orange-colored cloth, proclaiming: "You were Nimai Pundit, henceforth you are Krishna-Chaitanya". Then the devotees fell at his feet crying: "Master, Teacher, Swami, save us".

Nimai now took up his residence in the Sacred City of Puri, where stands the famous Temple of Jagannath. Here he came in close contact with Vasudeva Servabhauma, a noted master of the Nyaya Philosophy and one of the two foremost Vedic scholars of the period. At first he received the young *Sannyasi* as his pupil and strove to check his wild and unscholarly habit of singing

and dancing in praise of God, by daily reading and expounding to him certain Vedic texts. Chaitanya sat and listened in submissive silence. One day the Savant remarked: "Krishna-Chaitanya, I have been reading the Vedas to you these six days. How is it that you offer no comments?" Chaitanya replied: "You commanded me to listen and I have obeyed." "That is true, but I expected you to make some comment and thus let me know whether you understood me or not," rejoined Servabhauma. "I cannot make any comment for I do not understand a syllable of what you say", was Nimai's answer. "Not a syllable? Then why do you not ask me to explain? What is it you do not understand?" "The text is clear enough", Chaitanya answered simply. "It is only your explanation that confuses my mind." Then he began in his own way to expound the Vedas, and as Servabhauma followed him, anger and jealousy melted into wonder. "He is more than a Savant, he is a master, far greater in every way than I", he thought. On and on Chaitanya went, taking verse after verse, until the noted scholar, overpowered by the brilliant and profound rendering of his pupil, fell at Chaitanya's feet, crying out: "Pardon me, I treated you as an inferior, unaware that you had no equal among the sons of men".

Chaitanya now announced his desire to make a pilgrimage to the South; and taking with him Govinda, a faithful follower, he set out, repeating as he walked with arms upraised in worship: "My Lord, take care of me! My Lord, take care of me". Wherever he wandered—through wild jungles and dense forests or over sun-baked roads—this cry was ever on his lips. "If he happened to

meet a man as he walked along, he would say to him, 'Repeat the name of Hari'. Drawn by his irresistible charm, the stranger would turn and follow him, repeating the name of God. Then after a time the Lord would embrace him. At once he would be filled with a holy power which enabled him to transmit the same blessing to others. Then the Lord would bid him go home and proclaim devotion for God to all his village. Thus thousands who never saw the Lord were saved." It was in this way that Sri Chaitanya embraced the leper Vasudeva. Vasudeva was a good man. His long suffering had chastened his heart. Hearing that a great *Sannyasi,* who was perhaps the Lord Himself, had come to the temple of Kurma, near which he lived, he seized his staff and hurried to the temple. He arrived a half hour too late. The Lord had gone, and overcome with sorrow and disappointment, the leper fainted, calling out: "Lord, hast Thou forsaken me?" Sri Chaitanya, although two miles away, heard his cry. He stopped a moment as if to listen; then retracing his steps, he ran at full speed to the temple and lifting the body of the leper, he held it close in his embrace, unmindful of the foul sores that covered it. When Vasudeva awoke, he found himself sound and well. "What hast Thou done, Lord?" he exclaimed. "I came not to be healed. I came to see Thy lotus feet. My loathsome disease taught me humility and I had hopes of reaching God. But a sound body and perfect health will again generate pride and vanity in my mind." "No, my son," Chaitanya replied, "the Lord has chosen you as His own because of your unparalleled humility and your charity even towards the meanest insect."

While journeying, Lord Gouranga heard that in the forest of Choranandee was a dreaded robber-

chief named Naoroji and at once he plunged into the jungle to seek him. When he reached his hiding place, Naoroji came with drawn sword to meet him and asked what right had he, a holy man, to penetrate into the retreat of robbers. The Lord raised his head and gazed so long and tenderly at him that the robber grew restless and ill at ease. Then the Lord replied: "You call yourself a robber, but I see in you a great devotee." "Are you sincere in what you say?" "Quite sincere." "Do you mean to say," Naoroji asked again, "that if now I give up my evil life and surrender unconditionally at the Lord's feet, He will accept me?" "Beyond a doubt." The robber-chief murmured to himself: "I am already sixty and have no one to provide for. Day by day the hour of death is approaching. How foolish have I been." Tears poured down his cheeks. It seemed as if the holy man before him was drawing out his very soul. At last throwing away his sword, he called his men and said to them: "I can no longer lead you. You must choose another chief or break up the band. I have resolved to follow this holy man." The Lord rose to depart and Naoroji started to go with him, but the Lord checked him. "Oh, I see. I still wear my chieftain's dress," the robber said. Tearing it in shreds, he wrapped a piece of cloth about his loins and asked: "Now, my Lord may I go with you?" The Lord made no answer and thenceforth Naoroji followed him as his shadow.

Sri Chaitanya travelled rapidly through the South. Everywhere people caught the infection of his fervor and began with new zeal to serve the Lord. No one could resist the intensity of his devotion. A Raja of Travencore, coming one day in search of him, it is recorded, found him seated leaning against a tree with eyes closed, while tears

of joy streamed down his cheeks. The Raja begged him to sojourn in his palace, but he blessed him and passed on his way. As at Nadia, kings, *Sannyasis,* learned men and lawless highwaymen, all fell under his sway and became ardent devotees. He had an especial love for children, who flocked about him in great numbers. At the end of two years he returned to Puri, having kindled a new spiritual life throughout the whole of Southern India. The good news spread even to Nadia that the Lord had come, and hundreds of his earliest disciples, led by Adwaita and Sreebas, set out on foot and after a three or four weeks' journey, full of untold hardship, at last reached Puri. For four months they stayed with Chaitanya and the days passed in one unbroken feast of joy and worship. Then the Lord sent them home, saying: "You are householders, therefore you must perform your duties and maintain those who are dependent on you." The following year the *Bhaktas* (devotees), hundreds in number, again came to Puri. This time the women disciples also begged to come and husbands brought their wives and sons their mothers. Sivananda Sen, an ardent follower of Sri Chaitanya, bore all the expense of the pilgrimage; and every year he performed this same pious duty, paying the cost of the journey for all those who desired to see the Lord. It was also to Sivananda's son, the author of several Sanskrit works, that we are indebted for valuable records of Lord Gouranga's Life.

Nityananda was the closest of all Sri Chaitanya's disciples. One day the Lord called him and said: "You must go to Bengal". Nityananda cried out: "Leave you? Never! The body cannot live without the soul and you are my soul." But the Lord replied: "Bengal must be saved. You alone are

able to accomplish this difficult task. Because you love me, you do not wish to go away; but we are not in this world to please ourselves. Our hardest work lies in Bengal, where the leaders are learned and profoundly intellectual." "But it breaks my heart to leave you", Nityananda protested weeping. The Lord embraced him and said with inexpressible tenderness: "When you suffer in my absence, remember that I too am suffering for you." Then he continued: "Learned men are not so easily conquered by the display of intellectual powers. Appeal to their hearts and show them that there is something else in man besides his intellect. I have the profoundest pity for these intellectual men; please take special care of them. But save all without exception. Make no distinction between high and low, wise and ignorant, pious and worldly. Dispense your blessings to all alike. The greater the sinner, the greater his claim upon you. You will encounter much opposition, but you will overcome it all by love." So Nityananda was sent to Bengal with twelve others. Obeying his Master's admonitions, he neither preached, nor argued, nor expounded the Scriptures; he merely wandered from place to place with hundreds of followers, proclaiming the advent of a Saviour and calling on all men to take the name of God and be saved. He seemed mad with joy; and that joy, overflowing his heart, drowned others in its flood. The more hardened the sinner, the greater was Nityananda's compassion. Few could resist his appeal and thousands received his message.

While Nityananda was thus carrying out the task set him by his Master, Lord Gouranga himself came to Bengal. Landing at Panihati, near Calcutta, he proceeded to Nadia, and all along the way crowds so vast surrounded him that it was impossible to count their numbers. He spent seven

days at Kulia on the bank of the Ganges opposite his birthplace, then crossing the river and landing at his own bathing-Ghat, he walked once more to the threshold of his mother's house. A throng of people followed him in silence, remembering as they looked at this grave, majestic figure, the gay and learned youth, Nimai Pundit, who had once lived among them. This was his last visit to Nadia. He returned to Puri and at the early age of 32 passed from this earth.

REPORTS

Swami Paramananda began the new season's work at The Vedanta Centre of Boston on Sept. 20th and the following schedule of meetings has been announced for the winter: Sunday morning at 11 Service with Lecture and at 4 P.M. Vesper Service with Short Address; Tuesday at 8 P.M. a public Class-Lecture on the Bhagavad-Gita, and Thursday at the same hour the regular Students Class, in which Patanjali's Yoga Aphorisms will be the text book. A Special Course on "Practical Spiritual Living" will be given on Monday afternoon at 3, which non-members can attend by arranging with the Secretary; and the Swami will hold his usual Monday reception immediately after, from 4 to 5:30. The Saturday afternoon receptions at the Community House will also continue. These have already proved of great value in bringing the friends of the Centre into closer personal touch with the work. The new season opens with great promise. Although the attendance remained exceptionally large throughout the summer and there was at no moment a flagging of interest, during the month of September there was a steady increase in numbers, bringing up the average far beyond what it has been at this time

in previous years. The subjects for the Sunday Lectures during October will be: "Spiritual Culture the Crying Need of This Age," "Life after Death," "Concentration and Meditation," "Faith and Devotion."

The Centre celebrated the "Feast of the Divine Mother" on Tuesday evening, Sept. 29th, and a large number of friends assisted at the Service. Music, meditation, the chanting of Sanskrit prayers, and an address by the Swami filled the first part of the evening; then fruits, sweetmeats, and "paramannam" (a Hindu dish prepared by the Swami) were served, after which some time was spent in informal social intercourse. The Swami in his address explained that this was one of the greatest religious feasts of India, resembling the Christmas-tide of the West. For three days, especially in Bengal, there is rejoicing in every household, presents are exchanged, and the time is devided between worship and happy feasting. On the last day even enemies forgive and embrace one another as children of one Universal Mother and a new year is begun. Although here in the West, the Swami added, people may not accept this special form of the Feast, the spirit of it should be common to all nations. All should remember that they belong to one world-family, over which the Divine Mother presides, and that only in honoring Motherhood everywhere and living in love and peace with all men could we prove ourselves worthy children of the one God.

* * *

The following letter, delayed owing to the great irregularity of the foreign mails, reached us only a short time ago: "The war, causing disaster to so many, brought us the blessing of Swami Paramananda's presence. Detained in Geneva for

over a week, the Swami filled his time of waiting with daily meetings, besides receiving various visitors who sought his help and advice. Two afternoon Talks were given in town and five evening meetings were held in the quiet country place where the Swami was staying. All the meetings were regularly attended by an ever increasing number of people, whose appreciation and interest were manifested in various ways, one being the faithfulness of their attendance in spite of frequent bad weather and the considerable distance they had to cover. It seemed as if each meeting were more beautiful than the one before, and the closing meditation class held on Aug. 17th appeared to excel all preceding ones in power and reality. An interesting feature was the variety of nationality represented by the attendance, Dutch, English, Americans and Russians being there, as well as Swiss, the ages varying between 80 and 5. The Swami left us today, taking with him our love and gratitude for the light he brings and leaves with us. Now we hope to keep it burning and tend it faithfully till he comes again."

* * *

From California we have received the following Report: Swami Prakashananda recently made a very successful lecture tour of six weeks through Oregon and the State of Washington. Beginning at the Public Library of Portland, he gave in all eight lectures in that city, an equal number before various organizations in Tacoma and two at Everett. He also spent a week at Seattle, while at Eugene he was invited to lecture before the University of Oregon. Everywhere he met with great appreciation. The Swami has now established himself in San Francisco, where he is holding regular meetings.

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" 15th	*Law of Karma.*
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"Light shall come again from the East"
Tyndall.

VOL. III. NOVEMBER, 1914. No. 11.

Sri Ramakrishna tells the story of a man who, desiring to light the fire on his hearth at nightfall, took his lantern and went from door to door seeking a burning brand. Everywhere he asked in vain, until at last he stopped before the threshold of a neighbor, who, wiser than the rest, looked at him wonderingly and said: "Foolish man, why are you begging a brand from me? Do you not see that in your own hand you have a light? Go home and kindle your fire with that." This is the message of Vedanta. It does not say: "You are in darkness, I will give you light." Or: "Your light is dim and dying, that which I bring you is strong and bright; blow out yours and take mine." On the contrary, it proclaims to every living being: "In your own heart burns the only light that can truly lighten you. By that alone can you kindle the fire of wisdom which will burn off all impurities and reveal the God within."

Every page of the Vedic Scriptures, in unparalleled variety of form and figure, reiterates this one supreme lesson. Truth can have no geographical or racial limitations. As a Galileo in Italy, a Euclid in Egypt, an Archimedes in Greece, or an

Aryabhatta in India may discover a fundamental axiom in mathematics; so also the final vision of all things is possible to every mind that has the determination to strive for it, no matter what the creed or country. Ultimate attainment is not dependent on the acceptance of any personality or specific form of faith. Man must seek within and out of the depths of his own inner being evolve his creed; or, as Christ has taught, "work out his own salvation". The various religions are so many methods to achieve this end; and since every constitution differs from every other, only that can be a universal religion or method which is capable of endless modification. Therefore it must be untrammeled by dogma or doctrine and commensurate with creation itself in scope. Such is the broad base upon which the great Himalayan Seers of the Vedas have reared their teaching. In it, as Max Muller declares, every phase of religion, from the lowest to the highest, finds a place. According to its comprehensive classification, all are only so many branches of a gigantic educational system, each fitted to the special needs of some soul and leading to the one common goal of supreme enlightenment or God-vision.

As one sun illumines all this world, similarly He who dwells in the body illumines all bodies. The Supreme Lord abides in all beings equally; (He is) undying in the dying; He who sees (thus) sees truly. —*Teachings of Sri Krishna.*

THOUGHTS ON VEDANTA

By Swami Saradananda

Much has been said regarding the supremacy of the system of philosophy and religion revealed to the sages of India in bygone prehistoric times and known to us as the Vedanta. As affording a basis for reconciliation of all the contradictory and hostile systems of thought, by pointing to the one goal to which they have all been tending; as supplying a proper and reasonable solution of human life and its activities and of the good and bad motives of conduct that move the individual as well as the social and the national life in the world, and that have been equally beneficial, through harmony or friction, for the uplifting of humanity; and as upholding hopes of the highest enlightenment and expression of power for sinner and saint alike, through the mighty and irresistible processes of evolution, it has for centuries been commanding the respect of sincere and thoughtful men all over the world and will continue to do so for ages to come. The great exponents of Western pessimistic and optimistic thought, Schopenhauer and Emerson, have both of them showered praises on this system of Indian thought; and have acknowledged their indebtedness for the spiritual growth, the enlightenment, peace and solace that have been brought by it and through it into their respective lives, moving in such opposite lines. Interested bodies may say what they please in their misdirected zeal for orthodoxy, but the glaring search-

lights of the antiquarian, the philologist and students of the world's history, have proved again and again the fact that our world is one homogeneous whole and different nations and philosophies and religions, however independent and separate they may think themselves, are all related to one another for their respective growth and development, and are all indebted for some vital part or other to Indian civilization and Indian thought. System after system of philosophic and religious thought has arisen from this eternal fountain-head of wisdom and spirituality and has shed its blessings on the many, voicing the one message of concord and agreement. The claims of the spirit are recognized. "Man is not really what he seems to be. Infinite possibilities lie within him, as well as the power and the resources to bring them out. Deep in the heart of the infinite love and knowledge is his eternal abode, and never has he really lost the effulgent glory of his own absolute nature." . . . .

Out from the heart of the Indian Scriptures flowed the religion of the Zend, which, arranged and expressed with added power by Zarathustra, gave such a stimulus to Christianity, by supplying the latter with many of its cardinal principles of sin, atonement and devotion through love. Out of it again "in the long-drawn aisles of time" came forth Buddhism, a beautiful child full of sympathy and love and service to all, that sent its messages of peace and love even to Asia Minor, where a few hundreds of years after the mighty

"man of sorrows" repeated them in almost the same words, while teaching in the mountains of the holy land. Testimonies are not wanting in this direction and innumerable instances can be brought forward from the pages of history. But it is sufficient for our purpose here to see the power and vitality which the religious thought of India possessed of old, and the stimulus it afforded to the many great religious movements of the world. Has it died out at the present day? Has it become "a bewildering festering pool of ignorance and superstition," as some of our contemporaries in and outside our country have been advised to call it, forgetting in their hasty and one-sided zeal the debt of gratitude and fellowship which they owe to Indian spiritual thought? Are there no mainsprings of life and conduct for guiding and regulating the individual society and nation, to be found in the system of Vedanta? Our little paper is to discuss this vital question touching the Indian religious life; and to throw some hints and suggestions to help bring in the light that has been dawning on the horizon of India. Infinite possibilities lie imbedded in the teachings of the sages of old; and the more we turn towards them with uplifted gaze and consider them in their practical bearings, for the guidance and regulation of the conduct of the individual, the clearer becomes the vision of the future glory of the country. For societies and nations are but aggregates of different individual units; and a system of religion and philosophy

which has the power of directing the conduct of those units to higher and higher ends, cannot but help to ennoble and uplift the social and national standard.

In studying the religious history of the world, the one fact that becomes most obvious to the mind of the student is that all the great religions have begun with pessimism and painted the life of man on this side of the grave in dark colors. It is natural and easy for a man to take to this dark view of life, considering the thousand and one difficulties that beset his path in his travel through this vale of sorrow and tears, the thousand and one hopes that are crushed to pieces even from his childhood, and the many disappointments that crowd on his heels in this "two days' existence". The unrequited love, the faithlessness of many, the hard struggle and competition, the wicked in power, misery, disease and pain—all serve their quota in making him take refuge in this cynical view of human existence. "Turn your eyes away from this life and its miseries and strive to gain that life beyond the grave, where happiness reigns supreme and all inequalities of human conditions are smoothed down by a divine and loving hand"—thus say the Scriptures of the nations. Call after call goes out to bring man to this higher existence; and the life here and that hereafter are viewed as two entirely different things, so that man must give up the one in order to find the other. Examine the ethics of Buddhism, of Christianity, of the Koran

and the Avesta in the light of the lives and the teachings of their founders and of the first upholders of the respective faiths, and you will find this common strain of pessimism running through them all.

Pessimism, having thus given an aberrant vision of the world and human existence, brought forth the doctrine of suppression of the powers that lead man towards this life and its ill-afforded happiness. "Kill the flesh by all means;" "Death to the old man, who casts a longing look at this side of existence;" "The body is a festering mass of corruption, turn thou away from it"—all these ideas became the motive power of religion. Different means of torturing the body by starvation and decimation came to light and were regarded as so many means of salvation. Alas for human ignorance! Little did man dream that though the body should not be allowed to master the mind and the Self, yet it was the only instrument in his hands to attain to higher enlightenment and should therefore be taken care of to a certain extent. . . Religion sounded a different note altogether in the hands of Sri Krishna and the Yogis, who boldly asserted that not killing the flesh, but controlling and keeping it within proper bounds, will help man to realize the highest end; and that such was the meaning of the Vedas. "Control the activities of the senses from going into lower channels; waste not your energies by unnecessary privations, but regulate your food, your sleep and every other

affair of life and be pure in thought, word and deed"—thus say the Gita and Patanjali in loud tone. But the death-knell of pessimism was sounded by the discovery of progress through evolution by Kapila. It was weak at first and a mere theory; but it slowly but surely gathered strength and gained ground, till modern science came to its help and support with all the panoply of objective methods of proof. The wonderful discovery that force and matter are both indestructible; that both of these on examination afford infinite suggestions of being the modifications of one common substance; that the sum total of energy in the universe is always the same, whether it remains in the kinetic or potential form; that different forces are correlated and interchangeable; and that nature is uniform throughout her work and always working with the same materials in the same way on the different planes of existence, the physical, the mental and the spiritual—all this has helped us understand and express that old doctrine of Kapila better and with added power, and has given a new stimulus to religion all over the world.

Many a religion has had to change its tone, in adapting itself to this new light of science and reason; and many are lagging behind with faltering steps, unable to adapt and assimilate these innovations. Had we ever to do that? Had we ever to give up the one cardinal principle of the religion of the Vedas, the *dharma* that has been founded on the rock of evolution? Thanks to the sages of old,

though a little mortar here or cement there may have fallen down under the bombardment of science, the frame work of the hallowed structure proved strong enough to bear the brunt of the fight; and it required but little effort and concession to make peace and coöperate with the enemy. True science is never an enemy to true religion; its wars in all ages have been with ignorance and superstition and bigotry. . . . Is there no future possibility for that religion, which has been teaching the homogeneity of the universe from the earliest dawn of history, and the infinite progress of each unit in it through evolution, functioning on all planes of being and placing the motive power of it (that evolution) in the Self within? Can there be no vitality in the Scripture that teaches that the soul is beyond all creed, color and sex and that the highest enlightenment may be gained by all alike? Turn to the pages of the Vedas and you will find that revelation and vision transcending the senses have come both to men and women alike. Be strong, say the Vedas; depend upon your innate strength; let neither happiness nor misery turn you away from the pursuit of the highest ideal; take easily the changes that life brings every moment, recognizing that you have brought them upon yourself, and remember that you have the power of changing them again; above all, move in coöperation with nature, within and without, knowing that the God within you is ever giving powerful support. Thus alone can man transmute all his

energies to the highest ends and develop his present limited consciousness to the unlimited supra-conscious existence.

THE KATHA UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda.

Part IV.

(Continued from September Number)

V

He who knows this Atman, the living soul, the honey-eater (the perceiver and enjoyer of objects), ever near, as the lord of past and future, fears no more. This verily is That.

He indeed is blessed who can feel that this Self, who perceives objects and reaps the good and evil fruits of his actions, is one with that vast omnipresent Ruling Principle of the universe, the Controller of past, present and future. Thus knowing his true identity, he fears no more.

VI

He who sees Him seated in the five elements, born of Tapas (fire of Brahman), born before water, Who, having entered the cave of the heart, abides therein—this verily is That.

This verse indicates that He, the Great Self, is the cause of all created objects. According to the Vedas, His first manifestation was Brahma, the Personal God or Creator, born of the fire of wisdom. He existed before the evolution of the five elements, earth, water, fire, air and ether, hence

"born before water." He is the Self dwelling in the heart of all creatures. "This is what thou art seeking, O Nachiketas."

VII

(He who knows) Aditi, who rises with Prana (the Life Principle), existent in all the Devas (senses); who, having entered into the heart, abides there and who was born from the elements—this verily is That.

This verse is very obscure and seems like an interpolated amplification of the preceding verse.

VIII

The all-seeing fire which exists hidden in fire-wood, as the foetus is well-guarded in the womb by the mother, (that fire) which is to be worshipped day after day by watchful seekers (after wisdom), as well as by followers of Karma-Kanda (the path of rituals and external observances)—this verily is That.

Fire is called "all-seeing" because it illumines everything. Also as wisdom destroys all ignorance and imperfection, so it consumes all material objects. Therefore it is regarded as the symbol of wisdom and is cherished by all earnest seekers, whether they follow the path of meditation or the path of sacrifice.

IX

From whence the sun rises and whither it sets, upon That all the Devas (senses) depend. No one goes beyond That. This verily is That.

The Life-Principle is the source and goal of all

creation. Things rise from It and return to It. Each one of our sense activities must depend on It, because without It there would be no object to perceive and no power of perception.

X

What is here (in the visible world), that is there (in the invisible); he who sees difference (between visible and invisible) goes from death to death.

XI

By mind alone this (supreme knowledge) is to be obtained. There is no difference whatever (between visible and invisible). He who sees difference here (between these) goes from death to death.

In the sight of true wisdom, there is no difference between the creator and the created. Modern science has come to recognize that cause and effect must be of similar nature; hence there cannot be any difference between visible and invisible, manifested and unmanifested. But he who fails to see this, being engrossed in the visible only, goes from death to death, because all forms have beginning and end. The essence which dwells within is alone unchangeable and imperishable. This knowledge of the oneness of visible and invisible, however, cannot be acquired through sense-perception. It can only be obtained by the purified mind.

XII

The Purusha (Self), of the size of a thumb, resides in the middle of the body as the Lord of

the past and the future, (he who knows Him) grieves no more. This verily is That.

The seat of the Purusha or Self is said to be the heart, hence "It resides in the middle of the body." Although it is limitless and all-pervading, yet in relation to Its abiding place It is represented as limited in extension, "the size of a thumb," which refers really to the heart, often described as a lotus bud, which in size and shape may be likened to a thumb. As light is everywhere, yet we see it focussed in a lamp and believe it to be only there; similarly, although the life-current flows everywhere in the body, the heart is regarded as peculiarly its seat.

XIII

That Purusha, of the size of a thumb, is like a flame without smoke, Lord of the past and the future, He is the same today and tomorrow. This verily is That.

In this verse the teacher first defines the effulgent nature of the soul, whose light is pure like a flame without smoke. He now answers the question put by Nachiketas as to what happens after death, by declaring that no real change takes place, because the soul is ever the same.

XIV

As rain water, (falling) on the mountain top, runs down over the rocks on all sides; similarly, he who sees difference (between the invisible essence and visible forms) runs after them.

XV

O Gotama (Nachiketas), as pure water poured into pure water becomes the same (one with it), so also is it with the Self of an illumined Knower. (He becomes one with the Supreme).

PART V.

I.

The city of the Unborn, whose knowledge is unchanging, has eleven gates. Thinking on Him (Brahman), man grieves no more: and being freed (from ignorance), he attains liberation. This verily is That.

This human body is called a city with eleven gates, where the eternal unborn spirit dwells. These gates are the two eyes, two ears, two nostrils, the mouth, the navel, the two lower apertures, and the imperceptible opening at the top of the head. The Self or *Atman* holds the position of King or Ruler in this city; and being above the modifications of birth, death and all human imperfections, He is not affected by the changes of the physical organism. As the intelligent man through constant thought and meditation realizes the splendor of this Supreme Spirit, he becomes free from that part of his nature which grieves and suffers and thus attains liberation.

II.

He (Brahman) is the sun, dwelling in the bright heaven; He is the air dwelling in space; He is the fire burning on the altar; He is the guest dwelling in the house. He dwells in man, He dwells in those

greater than man. He dwells in sacrifice. He dwells in the ether. He is all that is born in water, all that is born in earth, all that is born of sacrifice, all that is born on mountains. He is the True and the Great.

This verse sets forth the all-pervading nature of the Self, which is not confined to one city or body, but is present in all forms of existence.

III.

He (Brahman), who sends the in-coming Prana (life-breath) upward and casts the out-going breath downward, seated in the centre (the heart) as the adorable Atman, Him all the devas (senses) worship.

IV.

When this Atman seated in the body goes out (from the body), what remains then? This verily is That.

V.

No mortal lives by the in-coming breath (Prana) or by the out-going breath (Apana), but he lives by another on which these two depend.

VI.

O Gautama (Nachiketas), I shall declare unto thee the secret of the eternal Brahman and what happens to the Self (soul) after death.

VII.

Some Jivas (individual souls) enter wombs to be embodied, others go into immovable forms, according to their deeds and knowledge.

This text shows the application of the law of

cause and effect to all forms of life. The thoughts and actions of the present life determine the future birth and environment.

VIII.

This Self who remains awake while all sleep, who grants all desires, That is pure, That is Brahman, That alone is said to be immortal. On That all the worlds rest. None goes beyond That. This verily is That.

IX.

As fire, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to what it burns, so does the Atman (Self) within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside.

X.

As air, though one, having entered the world, becomes various according to where it enters, so does the Atman within all living beings, though one, become various according to what it enters. It also exists outside.

By using these similes of fire and air, the teacher tries to show Nachiketas the subtle quality of the Great Self, who, although one and formless like air and fire, yet assumes different shapes according to the form in which it dwells. But, being all-pervading and unlimited, it cannot be confined to these forms; therefore it is said that It also exists outside of all forms.

XI.

As the sun, the eye of the world, is not defiled

by external impurities seen by the eyes, thus the one inner Self of all living beings is not defiled by the misery of the world, being outside it.

The sun is called the eye of the world because it reveals all objects. As the sun may shine on the most impure object yet remain uncontaminated by it, so the Divine Self within is not touched by the impurity or suffering of the physical form in which it dwells, for that Self is beyond all bodily limitations.

XII.

There is one Ruler, the Self of all living beings, who makes the one form manifold, the wise who perceive Him seated within their Self, to them belongs eternal bliss, not to others.

XIII.

Eternal among the changing, Consciousness of the conscious, who though one fulfils the desires of many, the wise who perceive Him seated within their Self, to them belongs eternal peace, not to others.

XIV.

They (the wise) perceive that indescribable highest bliss, saying "This is That". How am I to know It? Does It shine (by Its own light) or does It shine (by reflected light)?

XV.

The sun does not shine there, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor do these lightnings shine there, much less this fire. When He shines, everything shines after Him, by His light all is lighted.

PANTHEISM AND THE VEDANTA

By J. J. Goodwin

Almost nine out of every ten students of philosophy in Western countries, who examine into the religion propounded through the Upanishads and expounded by Sankaracharya, Ramanuja and others, give up the search after a time, expressing themselves fully convinced that the Vedanta Philosophy is Pantheistic; and probably at least eight out of the nine who reach that conclusion honestly believe what they say. And yet in reality such is by no means the truth. The Vedanta holds that while the idea of a God separate from man, regarded as an object of veneration and love, is not a contradiction of the real Truth, yet it represents want of ability to perceive that Truth in its reality, and says that the highest Truth is reached when we are able to see one only, not God and nature, but God and God alone.

Pantheism is also monistic, in that it says there is not a God and a nature; but Pantheism says that the unity is reached when we see God as nature,—nature as it appears to us. The whole difference lies in the use of one word. Where the Pantheist sees nature *as* God, and worships the Sun, or the Moon, or that part of nature which appeals to him as the highest and grandest expression of that God-nature, the Vedantist sees God *in* nature. He sees that nature, by itself, cannot exist one moment. He sees further that the assertion of an independent Infinite and a dependent

universe contains a grave contradiction, for that finite universe will itself limit the Infinite. It is insufficient to say that God, being Infinite, holds in His hand this power of self-limitation, for that would introduce into the Infinite two irreconcilable elements—an unconditioned element (if that were possible) and a conditioned element. Consequently God cannot be nature; or to put it more clearly, nature cannot express God. But by withdrawing within ourselves and from nature, that which we saw as nature we see anew as God; we are enabled to look through the veil which we ourselves have cast over the reality, and the veil disappearing reveals the God within. The subject, which has foolishly tried to objectify itself, withdraws that objectification within itself again and sees the Eternal subject alone, free and unconditioned by the limitations and imaginary qualifications with which the mind had surrounded it and dimmed its beauty. When we see nature, we do not see God; and when we see God, we do not see nature; because the very idea of seeing nature is projection of the subject (God); and the subject, regarded in itself and in its own light, has none of the imperfections and differentiations which we have imposed upon it in the process of objectification. Tennyson very beautifully expressed the idea thus:

"The sun, the moon, the stars, the seas, the hills
and the plains—
Are not these, O soul, the Vision of Him who
reigns?

Is not the Vision He? tho' He be not that which
He seems?
Dreams are true while they last, and do we not live
in dreams?"

True, indeed, it is that we do live in dreams; but while we are in them, we cannot afford to ignore a certain amount of reality in them. The very fact that we speak of getting out of the dream shows us this. Still no man is content to remain always a dreamer, and there must come a time to everyone when the utter uselessness of the things of sense vexes his mind and he tries to get out, to wake from his dream. When we have unthinkingly made attempt after attempt to express God, represented as the ideal and perfect good, in a nature which exists only by reason of the continual fight between good and evil, dissatisfaction begins and we commence the search for a way out. Some are able to realize freedom by repudiation of bondage, but this requires infinite strength and is far beyond the capabilities of most men and women. Others seek a slower, but perhaps safer and equally sure method, by making their natures pure and free from both good and evil, and so becoming more a reflection of their God-ideal; and for this gradual manifestation of the reality, devotion is the best means, a devotion which is so pure itself and so free from unworthy motives, that its very intensity brings the subject and the object, the lover and the Beloved into closer and closer com-

munion, until the one cannot be distinguished from the other.

But even this devotion has its stages. Thought can only be expressed in symbol; we cannot possibly think without giving name and form to that thought, and thus symbols arise, and it matters little whether that symbol be internal or external. Here again there has been a great deal of misapprehension as to the real significance of the Vedic religion. The man who personalizes his Ideal in his own mind, cannot see that the man who worships that Ideal in a symbol of wood or stone or external nature, is doing just as he himself is doing,—worshipping not nature or the image, but the qualities and attributes which he mentally attaches to it. Image worship is as completely misunderstood when it is regarded as Pantheism, as is the idea of the Divinity of man held by monists; and generally the greatest objections are raised by those who are themselves most attached to an Ideal to which they have given form and thus reduced it to symbology. There is room for much more liberality in these matters than we find at present. We need to realize that we are much nearer to our Ideal, much nearer to God, when we can really practise at every moment of our lives universal love, than when we limit that love to this form and that form, to this person and that person, nay, worse, to this method of reaching the Ideal and that method. If God is infinite, the universal is certainly nearer to Him than the particular details

of the universal; and it is through the Universal, and the Universal brought into our every-day life through love, that we shall eventually be ourselves of the same nature with the Ideal.

THE WARRIOR IN ANCIENT INDIA

War without the passions of war is a phenomenon which it has been possible to witness only in ancient India. The belligerent camps at Kurukshetra used to receive every night after the day's tremendous fighting mutual guests from the enemies. The Gita eliminated from the mind of Arjuna not only all misgivings about the war but also its passions. The sympathies of the toughest warrior among the Kauravas—a warrior who mowed down thousands every day on the battlefield—were on the side of the Pandavas (their enemies). War to be pursued as a duty imposed, with a mind free from passions, is an ideal not unfamiliar to the sons of India.

What is the ancient ideal of a *Kshattriya* (warrior) in India? A correct reply to this question presupposes a careful examination of the origin of the *Kshattriya* class. The earliest Vedic society was composed only of *Brahmanas,* that is, persons whose sole occupation in life was the practice of the Vedic religion. But in time it was found out by this spiritual society that it was necessary to organize temporal power within itself to protect its religious pursuits from the depredations of non-Vedic races. Mighty warriors, therefore, began to be brought under the spiritual ministrations of the

Rishis (Seers of Truth or Spiritual Leaders), who extended to them the right of Vedic culture and sacrifices and admitted them into the society. So out of this recognition of a warrior class as a part of the primitive society formed by the *Rishis* rose the *Kshattriyas* of ancient India; and this recognition had for its fundamental condition the temporal protection which the *Kshattriyas* as such had to exercise over the Vedic religious pursuits of the society. This protection was the essential function of the Aryan *Kshattriya* or warrior, and determined, as the underlying principle, the form and trend of his life, its pursuits and glories. Ancient tradition shows that Aryan kings considered it to be their highest duty and glory to be of service to the *Rishis* in putting down the enemies of their religious pursuits. This union of the *Rishi* with the *Kshattriya* clearly explains how the Vedic culture could spread itself almost all over India once at least in every *Yuga* or epoch of ancient history. The forest hermitages of the *Rishis* were the vanguards and pioneers of that culture; and wherever refractory non-Aryan warriors molested these hermitages, the Aryan *Kshattriya* kings were brought into service by the *Rishis* to subdue them, the next step being their gradual Aryanisation. The training of these *Kshattriyas* again in ancient times was pre-eminently a sort of spiritual training such as could originate only with the *Rishis*. So a *Kshattriya* is not simply a brave warrior according to our modern ideas about him; he is a man of emi-

nent spirituality with his whole life regulated by the supreme duty of protecting the Vedic religion.

—*Prabuddha Bharata.*

* * *

The Annual Report of the Ramakrishna Students Home at Madras has just reached us. The institution has now completed its ninth year and it is gratifying to read that although a more spacious building was secured during the current year, it has already been outgrown. The Home is able indeed to consider scarcely one-fifth of the applications received. As the report states: "The cry of the day is for education and those who cannot pay for it are the ones who need it most, because upon it depends their future well-being. When we see from the many appealing letters which reach us (often from orphans) how many in the villages of the Mofussil are hungering for an opportunity to read in some school or college and are held back by their poverty, we feel that too much cannot be done to enlarge the scope of our institution." Board, lodging, clothes, and the cost of tuition are supplied, and the boys are allowed to attend any school or college in Madras. Many former members have obtained excellent positions—one is an assistant in Wesley College, another is a sub-Assistant Inspector of schools, and a third is Tutor at Pachiappa's College; while among those now at the Home, it is encouraging to note that during the year a number won prizes or scholarships.

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BY

Swami Paramananda

of India

Chapel of the Vedanta Centre

1 Queensberry Street, Fenway

Season 1914-15

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It is true that I am one from head to foot, but here I am called eyes, here I am called ears, here I am called feet; and although I am one self, that which the feet can do, the eyes cannot do; what the eyes can do, the ears cannot do; what the ears can do, the nose cannot do. Therefore, being one, yet I am many. It is one self that is manifesting itself as eyes, as nose, as feet or hands. There is one self at the centre and all these are emanating from that centre as radii. Similarly, although God is one, still He is manifesting Himself in many forms. From the outside standpoint He is many; from the inside standpoint He is one, which has ramified Himself into many. From the standpoint of the circumference, the radii are many; from the standpoint of the centre there is but one. Thus God is appearing both as one and many. Often when a man looks at one object, it seems to him to be several; and when one thus appears to be many, it means a deranged vision. So from the standpoint of Truth there is one; from the standpoint of falsehood or *Maya,* there are many. A rope lies in the road and one man mistakes it for a snake, another for a wisp of hay,

a third for something else. The object remains one and the same; the ideas about it may be innumerable. In the same way God is one, but the ideas about Him are many.

—*Familiar Teachings by Swami Ramakrishnananda.*

DIVINE INCARNATION

By Swami Paramananda

God is infinite, His power is infinite, His manifestations therefore also must be infinite. How can man limit the Infinite by finite form? How can he ever stamp by one name That which is nameless and limitless? The Lord declares in the Bhagavad-Gita that "Wherever and whenever there is need of re-establishing true religion, then I come";—not "I" as a personal, finite being, but as the Supreme Spirit. The Divine manifests Himself to fulfill the needs of all mankind. "Mankind" means the universe, and whatever is given to bless the universe is for all. It is not confined to one group of people, one nation, one community or one creed. Truth is universal and all paths to Truth lead to the same Truth. He is one without a second, but His manifestations are many. Such is the conception of Vedanta regarding Divine Incarnation.

Inclusiveness is the key-note of the Teaching. It is true that God was manifested in the form of Jesus the Christ. He also manifested Himself in the form of Gautama Buddha. Krishna was another incarnation of the same Supreme Deity.

Whenever men fall asleep regarding spiritual things, when they are overpowered by materialism, then someone must come and set before them another standard of life. Mere words cannot help. We can read about many wonderful truths in the Bibles of the world,—that man is infinite in power, immortal, above birth and death, that the soul is a part of God; but are we always able to believe in these truths? We cannot, until we are shown, until we find some visible proof on which to base our conviction. If we accept merely on hearsay, our faith is easily shaken; but if we see one who lives and radiates these truths, then we can no longer doubt. And such a One is called a Divine Incarnation. In one sense we are all incarnations of Spirit; we all have the germ of the Divine within us. The fact that we live and move and have consciousness means that we possess some part of God; but we are only ordinary incarnations, while those others are Divine Incarnations, because they manifest Divinity in full measure.

We accept things as they are presented to us, not always having the power to prove them for ourselves, and this is how religion becomes a tradition. Our fathers and forefathers belonged to a church or creed or denomination and we take that as our religion. That, however, is not the true spirit of religion. True religion means individual investigation and more than individual investigation. It means individual proof. The soul must be satisfied. But who will show us how to

do this? The great Seers. Call them by any name you choose,—prophets, saints, Sons of God or Divine Incarnations; worship or honor them as you like; but they stand as brilliant lights, dispelling all the darkness of ignorance and showing us clearly what is Truth and what is untruth. In all countries we find the same idea of Messiahs and Prophets. In every Scripture we read that people are looking for someone to come and point out the way; and this pointing the way is the mission of every great Incarnation.

He does not come in pomp as a King, as a tyrant, forcing others to believe in Him. No, He simply comes as a humble servant of God to show mankind the spiritual path. He dedicates His life as a living offering on the altar of humanity; and those who are pure in heart can accept and assimilate His teaching; and they alone are blessed. Others, who can not see, rise in opposition because they are asleep and their sleep is disturbed. Whenever a man is dreaming or in slumber, if you stir him, he becomes annoyed with you; and that is exactly the case with the world. When a Divine Incarnation comes, He comes to proclaim Truth, Truth so profound, so gigantic that the world does not understand and cries out: "This man has come to do us harm; he is going to disturb our happiness and spoil our comfort. Let us torture him, let us kill him." But not all. There are a few who have been looking for a light, and it is easy for them to recognize Him. As we find when

Christ was born, a few wise men knew and rejoiced that One had come to bless the world; for what can be a greater blessing than a Light which leads to God, a Light which destroys all illusion and imperfection?

We hear constantly about charity, love, brotherhood, yet how can we believe in them? People talk of love, but we see the opposite; they talk of tolerance and we see intolerance everywhere. How can we believe until someone comes and proves these things through his life? Therefore we find that those who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness eagerly yearn for a sign; and this comes in the form of a man, perhaps lowly, perhaps very different from what one would call great from a worldly point of view, but who fulfills the law in himself. He proves that religion is being and becoming. Is it wrong then for us to take these Incarnations as our guides, our leaders, when we have not the power to find out the path for ourselves? No. That is the surest way of attaining the Truth.

We need something which is not beyond us. We want something which we can comprehend. If someone comes to us with a message, he must be able to speak so that we can understand; otherwise he may have wonderful truths to give us, but it will be all in vain. So a Divine Incarnation, although he descends from the Absolute, yet because he is like man, man can feel his reality, man can see his face, man can hear his voice, man can

follow his footsteps; for he sees that here is a being who appears like him, but who has overcome human imperfections and weakness. The idea of Divine Incarnation, therefore, is that God descends to the human plane, incarnates in the form of man, undertakes that which is for man to undertake, and thus following the path of mankind, He shows each one how he can move Godward and manifest the Highest. He is divine enough to be in touch with God and human enough to be in touch with man; therefore He is called a mediator, a mouthpiece, a connecting link through which man feels united with the Divine. When man strives alone, when he exerts his own reason, he falls so far short of that Unfathomable Mystery that often he gives up in despair. "What is the use of discussing these philosophical problems about the Soul, about God? We cannot prove them." This is the general conclusion of human minds, but not when we see a visible proof, if we are ready to see. But there must be purity of heart, there must be openness of mind, the soul must be hungry and thirsty; then we are able to recognize the Divine Light and we can follow.

Religion must become a part of our being; we must feel that it fills our life, that it satisfies our soul. When thus the spiritual realm becomes a reality, we grow strong in understanding, in power, in love. It transforms our whole being and uplifts us to a plane of consciousness where doubt and the darkness of ignorance have no access. But

this has to be done through practice. We must feel, see, and not merely theorize. No one has ever become great by having faith in a theory. What we want is tangible proof. How can we be satisfied if a thing has been proved by someone else? How can we know that the things of the Spirit are true until we see for ourselves? A Divine Incarnation rouses man to seek for this proof. He does not proclaim, "What I say, believe"; but he tells man that he also can know for himself, for he has the same latent power which he can manifest. He comes as a friend, as a comforter, giving to all who suffer or grieve this message of hope: "O children of Immortal Bliss! We have found the Kingdom of Heaven. Know that ye are children of that Realm. There is no imperfection, no limitation, no sin or sorrow for you. The ideas of limitation which you hold are only fleeting and arise from your partial consciousness of life. In reality you are part of the Supreme." Thus they stir the individual mind. Mankind must be inspired, must be awakened by the message and life of a Divine Incarnation.

The purpose of the Divine Incarnation, however, is not merely to manifest glory and power. Although he is a direct descendant of the Almighty, yet he comes especially to show that He is a brother of man; that if He is a son of God, so are all sons of God; all are children of the same Father, and as such it is their birthright to rise above limitation and reach the Highest. "Be ye

perfect as your Father in Heaven is perfect." This is what Christ constantly taught His disciples with the greatest emphasis. It is also the message of every Teacher and Scripture. Wherever we turn our eyes in our search for Truth, we shall find that this is the key-note of religion; and when we know how to live up to it, we are on the right path. Only then do we honor Him whom we regard as our Ideal.

It is not by words of praise that we prove our devotion to our Saviour, but by doing His will and becoming that which He wants us to be. It does not matter how we differ from one another in our outer modes of worship; as long as we are true to this essential factor of religion, we are bound to find a common basis of harmony among all forms of faith. "In whatever way men worship Me, in that way I reach them. All men follow paths which ultimately lead to Me." This is the conclusion of the Teaching of the Vedanta. Each one of us must worship his Ideal as he sees and comprehends Him; but we must remember that others, who apparently may be following different roads, are just as much in the right as we and will eventually reach the same goal. We must never raise our voice in condemnation of any sincere worshipper of God. Tolerance and peace, sympathy, not denunciation, with these lofty virtues in our hearts, if we strive to worship the Truth, we shall attain the Highest and fulfill the mission of human life.

WORDS OF THE GREAT TEACHERS

Let a man raise himself by his Self, let him never lower himself; for he alone is the friend of himself; and he alone is the enemy of himself. He who has conquered himself by the Self, he is the friend of himself; but he whose self is unconquered, his self acts as his own enemy like an external foe.

He whose heart is unattached to external pleasures of the senses realizes the happiness that is in the Self; being united with Brahman (the Supreme) by meditation, he attains to eternal bliss.

He who can withstand the impulse of lust and anger even here (in this life), before he is separated from the body, he is steadfast and truly a happy man.

He whose joy is within, whose pleasure is within, and whose light is within, that saint, being well-established in Brahman (the Supreme), attains to absolute freedom.

—*Sri Krishna.* (*About* 1400 *B. C.*)

* * *

Turn not away from the three best things: right thoughts, right words, right deeds.

Holiness is good, it is the best of all good. Holiness is happiness. Happiness is due to him who is best in holiness. The will of the Lord is the law of holiness.

Do not acquire the riches of the material world at the cost of the spiritual world. For he who destroys the spiritual world to obtain the riches of

the material world shall possess neither the Celestial Light nor the Paradise of Ahura Mazda.

—*Zoroaster.* (*About* 1000 *B. C.*)

* * *

All things in Nature work silently. They come into being and possess nothing. They fulfil their functions and make no claim.

Follow diligently the Way in your own heart, but make no display of it to the world.

Keep behind and you shall be put in front; keep out and you shall be kept in.

He that humbles himself shall be preserved entire. He that bends shall be made straight. He that is empty shall be filled. He that is worn out shall be renewed. He who has little shall succeed. He who has much shall go astray.

The Sage embraces Unity and is a model for all under Heaven. He is free from self-display, therefore he shines forth; from self-assertion, therefore he is distinguished; from self-glorification, therefore he has merit; from self-exaltation, therefore he rises superior to all. Inasmuch as he does not strive, there is no one in the world who can strive with him.

He who is great must make simplicity his base. He who is high must make lowliness his foundation.

—*Laotze.* (604 *B. C.*)

* * *

Happy is he who has overcome all selfishness; happy is he who has attained peace; happy is he who has found the Truth.

Have faith in the Truth, although you may not be able to comprehend it, although you may suppose its sweetness to be bitter, although you may shrink from it at first. Trust in the Truth. Have faith in the Truth and live it.

Struggle there must be, for all life is a struggle. But he who struggles should look to it lest he struggle in the interest of self against Truth and righteousness.

He who struggles in the interest of self, so that he himself may be great or powerful or rich or famous, will have no reward; but he who struggles for righteousness and Truth will have great reward, for even his defeat will be a victory.

Great is a successful general, but he who has conquered self is the greater victor.

The doctrine of the conquest of self is taught not to destroy the souls of men, but to preserve them. He who has conquered self is more fit to live, to be successful, and to gain victories than he who is the slave of self. Struggle then courageously and fight your battles vigorously, but be a soldier of Truth.

—*Buddha.* (*About* 555 *B. C.*)

* * *

Moral virtue consists in being able everywhere to exercise these five qualities: self-respect, magnanimity, sincerity, earnestness and benevolence. The higher type of man seeks all that he wants within himself; the inferior man seeks all that he wants from others. The nobler sort of man is

exacting of himself, the common man is exacting of others.

Tzu King asked, "Is there any one maxim which should govern one's whole life?" And the Master answered: "What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others." . . . "Possess good qualities yourself, then you may expect them from others. Before you can blame others, you must be free from fault yourself. The perfect man loves all men."

—*Confucius.* (551 *B. C.*)

* * *

Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

And everyone that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly of heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

—*Jesus the Christ.*

* * *

'I am indeed Brahman, without difference, with-

out change, and of the nature of reality, knowledge and bliss. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

'I am without change, without form, without blemish and without decay. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

'I am without attribute, without action, eternal, eternally free, and imperishable. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

'I am stainless, without motion, without end, pure, and devoid of old age and death. I am not, therefore, the body which is unreal.' This is what the wise call knowledge.

—*Sri Sankaracharya.* (*8th Century, A. D.*)

THE TRUE SPIRIT OF RELIGION

Extract by Swami Vivekananda

When each man stands and says: "My prophet is the only true prophet," he is not correct; he knows not the alpha of religion. Religion is neither talk, nor theory, nor intellectual consent. It is realization in the heart of our hearts, it is touching God, it is feeling, realizing that "I am a spirit" in relation with the Universal Spirit and all its great manifestations. If you have really entered the house of the Father, how can you have seen His children and not know them? And if you do not recognize them, you have not entered the

house of the Father. The mother recognizes her child in any dress and knows him however disguised. Recognize all the great, spiritual men and women in every age and country, and see that they are not really at variance with one another. Wherever there has been actual religion,—this touch of the Divine, the soul coming into direct contact with the Divine, there has always been a broadening of the mind which enables it to see the light everywhere.

Side by side with the modern theory of evolution, there is another thing: atavism. There is a tendency in us to revert to old ideas in religion. Let us think something new, even if it be wrong. It is better to do that. Why should you not try to hit the mark? We become wiser through failures. Time is infinite. Look at the wall. Did the wall ever tell a lie? It is always the wall. It is better to do something; never mind even if it proves to be wrong; it is better than doing nothing. Think some thought; it matters not whether you are right or wrong. But think something! Because my forefathers did not think this way, shall I sit down quietly and gradually lose my sense of feeling and my own thinking faculties? I may as well be dead! And what is life worth if we have no living ideas, no convictions of our own about religion? There is some hope for the Atheists, because though they differ from others, they think for themselves. The people who never think anything for themselves, are not yet born into the

world of religion; they have a mere jelly-fish existence. They will not think; they do not care for religion. But the disbeliever, the atheist, cares; and he is struggling. So think something! Struggle Godward! Never mind if you fail, never mind if you get hold of a queer theory. If you are afraid to be called queer, keep it in your own mind; you need not go and preach it to others. But do something! Struggle Godward! Light must come. If a man feeds me every day of my life, in the long run I shall lose the use of my hands. Spiritual death is the result of following each other like a flock of sheep. Death is the result of inaction. Be active! And wherever there is activity, there must be difference. Difference is the sauce of life; it is the beauty, it is the art of everything. It is variety that is the source of life, the sign of life. Why should we be afraid of it?

Now we are coming to a position to understand about the Prophets. We see that the historical evidence is that where there has been any real thinking, any real love for God, the soul has grown Godwards and has got as it were a glimpse now and then; has come into direct perception, even if only for a second, even if once in its life. Immediately "All doubts vanish forever, and all the crookedness of the heart is made straight, and all bondages vanish, and the results of action and Karma fly; for He is seen who is the nearest of the near and the farthest of the far." That is religion; that is all of religion; the rest is mere theory.

KATHA-UPANISHAD

Translated and Commentated by
Swami Paramananda

(Concluded from November Number)

Part VI.

I.

This ancient Aswattha tree has its root above and branches below. That (root) is pure, That is Brahman, That alone is called immortal. All the worlds rest in That. None goes beyond That. This verily is That.

This verse indicates the origin of the tree of creation (the *Samsâra-vriksha*), which is rooted above in Brahman (the Supreme) and sends its branches downward into the phenomenal world. Heat and cold, pleasure and pain, birth and death, and all the shifting conditions of the mortal realm—these are the branches; but the origin of the tree, the Brahman, is eternally pure, unchanging, free and deathless. From the highest angelic form to the minutest atom, all have their origin in Him. He is the foundation of the universe. There is nothing beyond Him.

II.

Whatever there is in the universe is evolved from Prâna (Brahman) and vibrates in Prâna. That (Brahman) is a mighty terror, like an upraised thunderbolt. They who know That (the Brahman) become immortal.

III.

From fear of Him the fire burns, from fear of

Him the sun shines. From fear of Him Indra (one who gives rain) and Vayu (air) and Death, the fifth, speed forth.

Just as the body cannot live or act without the soul; similarly, nothing in the created world can exist independent of Brahman (the Supreme), Who is the basis of all existence. His position is like that of a king whom all must obey; hence it is said that sun, moon, wind, rain, do His bidding. He is called an "up-raised thunderbolt," not because He is an arbitrary, wrathful Ruler, but because He is the One Supreme Power, Whose will is the law of the universe.

IV.

If a man is not able to know Brahman before the falling of the body, then he becomes embodied again in the created worlds.

If a man acquires knowledge of the Supreme before his soul is separated from the body, he is liberated; but so long as he fails to attain such knowledge, then he must take other bodies and return again and again to this realm of birth and death, until through varied experience he realizes the nature of the Supreme Spirit and his relation to Him.

V.

As in a mirror, so within oneself is Brahman seen; as in a dream, so (is He seen) in the world of the fathers (departed spirits); as in water, so (is He seen) in the world of the Gandharvas (the

angelic realm). *As light and shadow, so* (*is He seen*) *in the world of Brahmâ* (*the Creator*).

When by means of a purified understanding one beholds God within, the image is distinct as in a polished mirror; but when one tries to perceive Him by other means, then He grows vague and indistinct as images seen in dream or in water. One cannot have a clear vision of the Supreme by attaining to the various realms known as heavens, where one reaps the fruit of his good deeds. It is only by developing one's highest consciousness here in this life that perfect God-vision can be attained.

VI.

Knowing that the senses are distinct (*from the Atman*) *and their rising and setting separate* (*from the Atman*), *a wise man grieves no more.*

A wise man never confounds the *Atman* which is birthless and deathless with that which has beginning and end. Therefore when he sees his senses and his physical organism waxing and waning, he knows that his Real Self within is never affected by these outer changes, so he remains unmoved.

VII.

Beyond the senses is the mind, beyond the mind is the intellect, higher than intellect is the Great Atman (*Self*), *higher than the Atman is the Unmanifested.*

VIII.

Beyond the Unmanifested is the all-pervading

and imperceptible Self. By knowing Him, the mortal is liberated and attains immortality.

This division of the individual nature into senses, mind, intellect, self-consciousness, the creative force and the Absolute Self is fully explained in the commentary of verse XI., Part III.

IX.

His form is not to be seen. No one can see Him with the eye; He is perceived by the heart, by the purified intellect and by the meditative mind. They who know this become immortal.

Brahman being formless, cannot be discerned by the senses; hence all knowledge of Him must be acquired by our higher, subtler faculties of heart, intellect and mind, which are developed only through meditation.

X.

When the five organs of perception become still, together with the mind, and the intellect ceases to move, that is called the highest state.

The teacher now shows *Nachiketas* the process by which the transcendental vision can be attained. The out-going senses,—seeing, hearing, smelling, touching, tasting—the restless mind and the intellect, all must be indrawn and quieted. The state of equilibrium thus attained is called the highest state, because all the physical and mental forces become united and focussed, thus giving one the power of supersensuous vision.

XI.

This firm holding back of the senses is what is

known as Yoga. Then one becomes watchful, for Yoga comes and goes.

Yoga literally means to join or to unite the lower self with the Higher Self, the object with the subject, God with the worshipper. In order to gain this union, however, one must first disunite oneself from all that distracts the physical, mental and intellectual forces; so the outgoing perceptions must be indrawn and detached from the external world. When this is accomplished through constant practice of concentration and meditation, the union takes place of its own accord. But it may be lost again, unless one is watchful.

XII.

He cannot be attained by speech, by mind or by the eye. How can That (Supreme) be realized except by him who says "He is"?

XIII.

He should be realized as "He is" and also as the reality of both (visible and invisible). He who knows Him as "He is," to him alone is the real Truth revealed.

This supersensuous vision cannot be gained by man's ordinary faculties. By mind, eye, or speech the manifested attributes of the Divine can be apprehended; but only one who has acquired the supersensuous sight can directly perceive God's existence and declare definitely that "He is," that He alone exists in both the visible and the invisible world.

XIV.

When all desires dwelling in the heart cease, then the mortal becomes immortal and attains Brahman here (in this life).

XV.

When here all the ties of the heart are cut asunder, then the mortal becomes immortal. Such is the teaching.

XVI.

There are a hundred and one nerves of the heart. One of them penetrates the centre of the head. Going upward through it one attains immortality. The other (hundred nerve-courses) lead, in departing, to different worlds.

The nervous system of the body provides the channels through which the mind travels; the direction in which it moves is determined by its desires and tendencies. When the mind becomes pure and desireless, it takes the upward course and at the time of departing passes out through the imperceptible opening at the crown of the head; but as long as it remains full of desires, its course is downward towards the realms or worlds where those desires can be satisfied.

XVII.

The Purusha, the inner Self, of the size of a thumb, is ever seated in the heart of all living beings. With perseverance man should draw Him out from his body as one draws the inner stock from a blade of grass. One should know Him (the Self) as pure and deathless, as pure and deathless.

As has been explained in Part IV., verse XII., the Inner Self, although unlimited, is described as "the size of a thumb" because of its abiding place in the heart, often likened to a lotus-bud which is similar to a thumb in size and shape. Through the process of steadfast discrimination, one should learn to differentiate the soul from the body, just as one separates the pith from the reed.

XIX.

Thus Nachiketas, having acquired this wisdom taught by the Ruler of Death, together with all the rules of Yoga, became free from imperfection and death and attained Brahman (the Supreme). So it will be with another who also knows the nature of the Self.

May He (the Supreme Being) protect us both. May He be pleased with us. May we acquire strength. May our study bring us illumination. May there be no discord among us.

OM! Peace! Peace! Peace!

REPORTS

Swami Paramananda delivered a lecture on "The Spiritual Culture of India" before the Theosophical Society of Boston on Sunday evening, Nov. 1st. The hall was well filled and the audience listened with close attention, asking a number of questions at the end. The Swami in introducing his subject, said: "Unity in diversity is the law of creation. We cannot understand the plan of the universe until we comprehend the place which each race and nation takes in it; for each has a special mission

to fulfill. Of the four great ancient races which peopled Egypt, Babylon, China and India, the first three have left us records chiefly of wars and dynasties; in India, on the contrary, the records are all of spiritual rulers and conquests. It was not that India did not have a great and glorious secular history; but her vital interest was in spiritual matters; hence her effort was to perpetuate her achievements in this higher realm. Even her kings and warriors were trained by the *Rishis* or Seers of Truth to covet as their greatest victory the subjugation of their lower nature; and to measure strength, not by muscle and sinew, but by insight and knowledge of the Divine. Their duty was not to gratify personal ambition by seeking to extend their kingdom, but to protect the weak, to keep order, and to fight for every righteous cause. In all matters of importance, they sought the guidance of the illumined Sages; and thus it was that while elsewhere we see the state choosing its religion, in India religion formed the state. Indian Philosophy showed man that he was not rich because he possessed earthly things, but because he had an immortal soul; and since to know this was held up as the highest end of life, the chief energy of the nation was devoted to spiritual pursuits."

* * *

A letter containing the following account of the work in Geneva has been received: "Since Oct. 12th we have begun regular weekly meetings at 4.30 P. M. They are regularly attended by fifteen

of us and sometimes there are over twenty. We begin by some minutes of silence and one of the prayers or salutations; next we read from "The Way of Peace and Blessedness" one time and "Raja Yoga" the other week; then close with a prayer and quiet. Several members of the group have declared that these meetings already mean more to them than any thing else in their lives." Before leaving Geneva Swami Paramananda organized this study class, to hold together those most deeply interested in the Vedanta teaching.

* * *

At the Vedanta Centre of Boston, the Services and Classes have continued as usual. Special appreciation has been manifested for the new class on Monday afternoon and the attendance at this and all the meetings has been excellent during November. In December Swami Paramananda will give a course of lectures on the Great Saviours. All the Services and Classes will remain the same through the month.

SPECIAL NOTICE

The present number closes the third volume of "The Message of the East." We beg to thank our readers for their appreciation and encouragement. "The Message" sets out on its fourth year with the earnest hope that it may prove of even greater usefulness than in the past and through the co-operation of its friends reach a still larger number. It will be deeply appreciated if the subscribers will renew their subscriptions before the new year begins.

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